# Summit of the Americas, 2001

# Canada and the Summits of the Americas : A National Report

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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

This is Canada's first report on the Summits of the Americas process. It focusses primarily on the 1998 Santiago Plan of Action. References to mandates originating from the 1994 Miami Summit of the Americas are also included, as many of the commitments from Miami continue to be implemented. The report is divided into four sections that mirror the four main themes of the Santiago Plan of Action. These four themes are in turn broken down into 28 sub-themes, each with at least one corresponding action item. Throughout the report, action items are highlighted in bold type. Achievements described represent a summary of the work Canada has done in support of summit mandates and in related areas. This report is a resource document and each section may be read independently. Every effort has been made to provide information that is as accurate and complete as possible.

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ANNEX - PLAN OF ACTION

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Canada's future is inextricably linked to that of our partners in the Americas — geographically, economically and politically. Together, we stand at a significant moment in our common history as we face the collective challenge of transforming the region's political, economic and social promise into a more prosperous, secure and freer future for all citizens.

In April 2001, the presidents and prime ministers of the 34 democratically elected governments of the Western Hemisphere will meet in Quebec City (Canada) at the Third Summit of the Americas to chart a common course for the new millennium. As chair of the Summit, Canada has played a leading role in developing the agenda and providing support for preparatory activities. These efforts represent a major undertaking requiring co-operation among federal, provincial/territorial and municipal governments, as well as information sharing and consultation with the private sector, Indigenous peoples and civil society organizations.

The first two Summits of the Americas — held in Miami (United States) in 1994 and in Santiago (Chile) in 1998 — fostered comprehensive, practical co-operation on a range of issues of common concern. In Miami, leaders sought to strengthen hemispheric partnerships in order to encourage the advancement of mutual interests, including peace, democracy, prosperity and social justice. Their aim was to channel the momentum created by the convergence of democratic values and a new spirit of economic liberalization in the region into a plan of action with 23 initiatives grouped under the following themes:

- Preserving and Strengthening the Community of Democracies in the Americas

- Promoting Prosperity Through Economic Integration and Free Trade

- Eradicating Poverty and Discrimination in the Hemisphere

- Guaranteeing Sustainable Development and Conserving the Natural Environment for Future Generations

Following the Miami Summit, the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) was created to monitor and manage follow-up and implementation of Summit initiatives. Implementation of each of the 23 initiatives contained in the Miami Plan of Action was co-ordinated either by a specific country, a regional or international organization or a multilateral development bank.

Planning and preparation for the Second Summit of the Americas was carried out by the SIRG, and in 1998 leaders of the Americas met again in Santiago (Chile) to examine four key themes[1]:

- Education: The Key to Progress

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[1] The issue of sustainable development — a 1994 Summit of the Americas agenda item — was addressed at a separate Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Santa Cruz (Bolivia) in December 1996.

- Preserving and Strengthening Democracy, Justice and Human Rights
- Economic Integration and Free Trade
- Eradication of Poverty and Discrimination

At the Santiago Summit, leaders approved a plan of action containing 28 mandates under the aforementioned themes, which complement commitments endorsed at the First Summit of the Americas.

Since the Miami Summit in 1994, Canada has been active in translating Summit mandates into action at home and in the Hemisphere, and in monitoring implementation through the SIRG. Follow-up is critical to ensuring that the Summits are successful in advancing the hemispheric agenda and that progress made on commitments endorsed by leaders is monitored and reported.

*Canada and the Summits of the Americas* is an overview of efforts undertaken by Canada to support commitments made by leaders at previous summits. While the Report focusses primarily on the Santiago Plan of Action, references to mandates emanating from the 1994 Miami Summit of the Americas are also included as many of these commitments continue to be implemented. The report is divided into four sections and mirrors the four themes of the Santiago Plan of Action.

**Education: The Key to Progress**

Chapter I reviews progress achieved in improving access to quality education and training. Among other things, it examines fellowships and exchange programs; development and use of information and communications technologies in education, including distance education; educational statistics and quality evaluation; programs for vulnerable populations; education for the workplace; professionalization of teachers; and intercultural education.

The chapter describes how Canada facilitates access to higher education; incorporates marginalized groups into classrooms; develops standards for reading, writing, mathematics and science; offers training for greater integration into the workplace; and uses technology to link schools and communities to the rest of the Hemisphere. It shows how Canada's education system offers Canadians a brighter future and the opportunity to compete and succeed in a knowledge-based economy, and it illustrates the federal, provincial and territorial governments' commitment to ensuring that all Canadians have access to quality lifelong learning opportunities.

A number of strategies and initiatives for developing strong literacy skills and for improving access to education/training are examined. The chapter also highlights efforts made across Canada to integrate and maximize the participation of vulnerable groups including women, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities, socio-economically disadvantaged Canadians, people facing cultural and/or linguistic barriers, and members of visible minorities.

Because quality education depends on the skills and knowledge of teachers, a number of teacher training programs are being created in Canada and internationally to ensure ongoing professional development. In Canada, these programs are helping to regulate the teaching profession; set professional standards and requirements; ensure consistent approaches to teaching; and promote competence in information and communications technology skills. In the Americas, programs focus on improving school governance, administrative management and the quality of basic education.

**Preserving and Strengthening Democracy, Justice and Human Rights**

Chapter II focusses on Canada's efforts to advance democracy, justice and human rights. It highlights programs and initiatives to promote and safeguard the rights of all Canadians, including the right to due process, protection from discrimination and freedom from exploitation. It also demonstrates the importance Canada attaches to the rule of law; transparency and openness; civil society participation in public issues; freedom of thought and expression; and the protection of vulnerable groups, including women and children.

Canada works hard at home, regionally and internationally and through multilateral institutions — including the United Nations (UN), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Commonwealth — to promote and protect human rights; consolidate democratic values, practices and institutions; and strengthen the structures and systems that deal with the administration of justice.

This report examines the Government of Canada's adoption of domestic measures and its active participation in multilateral forums — including the UN, the G–8 and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development — to combat corruption; control and prevent the illicit consumption of and trafficking in drugs; prevent, fight and eliminate terrorism; and combat money laundering.

*Canada's Drug Strategy* was released in June 1998, setting out the principles of the government's commitment to addressing substance abuse domestically. The strategy aims to reduce the demand for drugs and drug-related mortality and morbidity; improve access to substance abuse information and interventions; restrict the supply of illicit drugs; reduce the profitability of illicit drug trafficking; and reduce the cost of substance abuse to Canadian society. To achieve these goals, the Strategy sets out a framework that recognizes the importance and interdependence of a number of components — research and knowledge development; knowledge dissemination; prevention programming; treatment and rehabilitation; legislation, enforcement and control; national co-ordination; and international co-operation.

Canada strongly supports international efforts to eliminate terrorism that are consistent with human rights, the rule of law and the protection of fundamental freedoms. Canada has signed 12 international counter-terrorism conventions — 10 of which have been ratified. A continuing review of domestic measures is underway to ensure compliance with UN and G-8 commitments.

Canada also works multilaterally through the UN and the OAS to identify appropriate counter-terrorist mechanisms. Within the UN system, Canada chaired the successful negotiation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombing and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. These conventions plus others form the basis of a strong international regime aimed at eliminating safe havens for terrorists.

Because peace and security are vital for the well-being of people and of democratic institutions, the promotion of confidence and security-building measures in the Americas is one of Canada's key regional priorities. Canadian efforts in this regard include promoting regional dialogue with a view to strengthening the inter-American system, de-mining, promoting transparency in defence matters, increasing co-operation with UN peacekeeping efforts, strengthening multilateral disaster preparedness and response capacity, and addressing the special concerns of small island states.

Chapter II also highlights the Government of Canada's efforts to support and provide fair labour policies, laws, programs and assistance, including providing temporary income replacement for insured workers who become involuntarily unemployed; developing, administering and enforcing legislation and regulations related to wages, the workplace and working conditions; respecting and incorporating socially disadvantaged groups such as women, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and visible minorities; and providing accurate and timely labour market and career information.

### Economic Integration and Free Trade

Chapter III describes Canada's commitment to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) as a principal means of stimulating economic growth and development in the Hemisphere through liberalized trade and investment. The chapter provides a general overview of Canadian efforts to support the Santiago Plan of Action mandates and looks at progress toward reaching an FTAA agreement.

Canada recognizes the special needs and circumstances affecting the integration of smaller economies into a Free Trade Area of the Americas and has been a strong supporter of the measures taken to support smaller states in the negotiations. Canada is an active participant in meetings of the FTAA Consultative Group on Smaller Economies, where issues such as technical assistance needs and the concept of special and differential treatment are raised. Canada has directed substantial resources to the region's vulnerable countries with a view to building their capacity to integrate themselves into the world trading system and participate fully in the FTAA process, thereby positioning these countries to reap the full benefits of a final agreement.

Canada believes that well-functioning financial markets are key to promoting growth and development and to reducing countries' vulnerability to crises. Consequently, it is working to strengthen, modernize and integrate financial markets across the Hemisphere and to implement universal standards and codes, especially in the area of financial supervision and regulation.

Chapter III describes how Canada is also working with its hemispheric partners on a number of other fronts — including science and technology, energy co-operation, climate change, telecommunications and transportation — all of which are related to and have an impact on the overall development and economic integration of the region.

## Eradicating Poverty and Discrimination

Chapter IV describes what Canada has done to help eradicate poverty and discrimination.

Canada has legislation aimed at eliminating discrimination and violence against women and guaranteeing the rights of children, and the Government of Canada promotes various initiatives to improve the health and well-being of women and children. Multilaterally, Canada works actively at the United Nations and the OAS toward the elimination of violence against women and children, and through the International Labour Organization to support non-discrimination in employment and the elimination of child exploitation.

Since 1988, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Gender Equality Funds have supported international commitments made in the areas of poverty reduction, political participation, economic empowerment, violence, health and education, in the Americas. These funds have improved the living conditions of rural women; supported domestic violence programs; increased the political participation of women; helped train police and judicial officials; and provided health care and safe houses for victims of domestic violence.

Chapter IV highlights ways in which Canada's Official Development Assistance Program supports developing countries in order to reduce poverty and contribute to a more secure, equitable and prosperous world. Canada is responding to the development challenge in the Americas by supporting programs and projects that flow from the Miami and Santiago plans of action. Canadian activities aim to promote a politically stable, economically liberal and socially equitable region, free of environmental degradation. More recently the challenge has included humanitarian relief efforts around natural disasters — such as hurricanes Mitch and Georges and El Niño.

Since 1995, the Government of Canada has been reviewing its approach to addressing small business issues and concerns. In response to changes in the economic environment due to new information technologies, connectedness and an opening of trade, Canada has moved toward creating conditions that are supportive of employment-generating private sector growth. As a result, the Government of Canada relies on a wide range of policy levers, developed and implemented by a number of departments and agencies, to facilitate and encourage small business growth and development. Central to this approach is the recognition of the vital role that small businesses play in the Canadian economy.

In the Hemisphere, the Government of Canada has invested more than US$400 million to provide training, technical assistance and business development opportunities for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises in the Americas. These programs enhance the capacity of businesses, strengthen social and economic infrastructures, and ensure better quality production and products. The goal is to encourage the development of successful enterprises, which in turn helps to increase incomes for employees and employers.

The Government of Canada promotes respect for workers' rights and labour standards both at home and throughout the Americas. In 1999, for instance, Canada shared with the OAS the key developments and changes it has made over the past 10 years in labour legislation — mostly in the areas of employment standards, industrial relations and occupational safety and health.

Canada is working to improve the participation of Aboriginal people in Canadian society. In 1998, the Government of Canada launched *Gathering Strength: Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan*. Through the Plan, the federal government is promoting self-sufficiency and economic development; developing labour and training programs to help Aboriginal people prepare for, find and keep jobs; improving access to health care; and supporting Aboriginal education and language programs. Canada also plays a key role in promoting indigenous issues at the international level — bilaterally and multilaterally — through institutions such as the UN and OAS.

### Conclusion

Since the First Summit of the Americas held in Miami, Canada has worked to address issues dealt with in the Summit mandates, both at home and in the Hemisphere. Canada is committed to monitoring the implementation of Summit plans of action and to reporting on their activities. While many efforts are already underway, new strategies have been and are being developed and pursued in response to the evolution of the Summit process.

Canada is proud of its achievements in working at home and in the Hemisphere and of the contribution that the Summit of the Americas process has made to improving the quality of life for Canadians and for the peoples of the Americas.

# INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, Canada has embraced a dynamic relationship with the Western Hemisphere — we joined the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1990; signed the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994 and the Canada-Chile Free Trade Agreement in 1997; and participated in the first two Summits of the Americas — in Miami (United States) in 1994 and Santiago (Chile) in 1998. As well, Prime Minister Chrétien led two major trade missions to Latin America in 1995 and 1998.

During 1999-2001, Canada has taken centre stage in the Hemisphere as host of a series of major events leading up to the Third Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, in April 2001. The first event, which took place in the summer of 1999, was a celebration of youth, sport and culture at the Pan American Games held in Winnipeg. The second event in the series was the Ninth Conference of Spouses of Heads of State and Government of the Americas, held in the fall of 1999 in Ottawa. Canada played a lead role by helping to advance a number of priority issues, including childhood development, health and education. To reflect the contributions of civil society, a fair and exhibit hall focussing on non-governmental organizations was also made part of the official agenda.

As chair of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations for the first 18 months of the negotiations, Canada hosted the FTAA Trade Ministerial in Toronto in November 1999. Immediately preceding this event, the Canadian business community organized the Fifth Americas Business Forum (ABF), also held in Toronto. At the same time, Canada sponsored a forum organized by civil society, which ran parallel to the FTAA and ABF events. Civil society groups presented recommendations to the Minister for International Trade and to 22 of his hemispheric colleagues.

In June 2000, Canada hosted the 30th OAS General Assembly in Windsor; the meeting also marked Canada's 10th anniversary as a full member of the Organization. The OAS is the premier political body for multilateral dialogue and decision making in the Americas and provides a forum for high-level debates and decisions on the major issues affecting the well-being of the peoples of the Hemisphere. In Windsor, foreign ministers and national delegations from the Hemisphere's 34 democratically elected governments considered 70 resolutions and discussed hemispheric democracy and human security; they also approved the themes that will be discussed at the upcoming Summit of the Americas.

The 2001 Summit will therefore represent the culmination of several years of intense activity by Canada in the Hemisphere. The Summits of the Americas process is rooted in a commitment to democracy, human rights and the rule of law; the promotion of economic prosperity and free trade; and the development of a social agenda that aims to protect all citizens of the Hemisphere — women and men, children and youth, Indigenous peoples, people of African descent, persons with disabilities and other marginalized or vulnerable groups. This Report is intended to provide Canadians and others with a detailed overview of what Canada has done to respond to those needs and advance a shared commitment to improve the quality of life in the Hemisphere.

## EDUCATION: THE KEY TO PROGRESS

The importance that the Americas attach to education is reflected in the commitment to broad-based reform. These reforms are based on a consensus with respect to the challenges confronting education. They rest on principles of equity, quality, relevance and efficiency. Equity ensures that all people have the opportunity to receive quality education services, thereby reducing the effects of inequalities based on socio-economic status or various forms of discrimination. Quality implies the achievement of high levels of cognitive development, capabilities and attitudes. Relevance means that an educational system can meet the needs and aspirations of society as a whole, taking into account all of its diversity. Efficiency is the provision of adequate resources, used optimally, in order to enhance educational achievements.

In this spirit, heads of states and governments agreed to make education a key priority at the Second Summit of the Americas held in Santiago (Chile) in 1998. In an effort to move toward universal access to education and to attain high-quality education across the Hemisphere, leaders endorsed several mandates.

In addition, governments entrusted their ministers of education to review the Santiago objectives and devise a strategic plan that would deliver access to quality primary education for all children and access to secondary education for at least 75 percent of youth by the year 2010. Ministers of Education from the Americas quickly took up the call and met in Brasilia (Brazil) in July 1998. They focussed their attention in the following areas: distance education; fellowships and exchange programs; development and use of information and technology in education; and educational statistics and quality evaluation . The result was a declaration on national commitments to education as a priority dossier and a plan of action, including:

- compensatory programs for vulnerable populations;
- education quality assessment systems;
- educational management, institutional capacity and decentralization;
- education for the workplace;
- professionalization of teachers;
- intercultural bilingual basic education; and
- information and communication technologies.

## EDUCATION IN CANADA

Canada is a federation composed of 10 provinces and three territories, each of which, within the federative system of shared powers, is exclusively responsible for education. While Canada does not have a central ministry or office of education, its Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) provides a forum for education ministers from the 13 jurisdictions to consult on matters of common concern, share information and represent Canadian education internationally. Established in 1967, CMEC is considered to be the national voice for education in Canada by providing a mechanism through which ministers can consult one another, and co-operate with national education organizations and the Government of Canada (www.cmec.ca).

The provinces and territories have developed their own educational structures and institutions, reflecting the regional circumstances and the diversity of the country's social and cultural fabric. The 13 educational systems are more alike than they are different with all systems maintaining a three-tiered structure of elementary, secondary and post-secondary schooling. As well, all jurisdictions provide universal, free and compulsory elementary and secondary schooling. Post-secondary education is provided by universities and colleges, community colleges or institutes of technology.

The three northern territories — the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut — have been assigned responsibility for the delivery of educational services through a federal statute. The Government of Canada provides funding for education in these territories, each of which has established its own department of education that manages the delivery of educational services.

While the provinces retain responsibility for training, the Government of Canada provides for the education of Aboriginal Canadians living on First Nations reserves — with the exception of the Cree, Inuit and Naskapi of Quebec, whose education is the responsibility of that province — as well as the education and training of individuals in the Canadian Armed Forces, Coast Guard and Correctional Services. The federal government also provides financial support for post-secondary education, adult occupational training and the teaching of the two official languages, especially second language training.

In all of the provinces and territories, members of school boards (or, in the case of New Brunswick, district parent advisory committees) are elected by public ballot. The powers and duties of these boards are defined in provincial/territorial statutes and are, in general, consistent throughout Canada. School boards generally have authority over implementing curriculums, operating and administering school systems, acquiring required financial resources, initiating proposals for new construction or other major capital expenditures, and staffing.

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**Implement targeted and inter-sectoral educational policies, as necessary, and develop programs that focus specifically on groups at a disadvantage in the areas of education, functional illiteracy and socioeconomic conditions, with attention to women, minorities and vulnerable populations. Inter-sectoral programs in education, health and nutrition, as well as early childhood educational strategies, will be priorities, inasmuch as they contribute more directly to plans to combat poverty.**

## EDUCATION FOR DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

### Canadian Provinces

Provinces have focussed on providing Canadians with universal access to quality education. For example, Saskatchewan Education provides financial and consultative support to 31 urban and 10 northern community schools in communities with significant Aboriginal populations and children and youth at risk primarily due to socio-economic conditions. The initiative has proven successful in meeting the needs of these populations by providing high-quality learning that is culturally affirming, academically challenging and includes early intervention. It also includes adult education in some parts of the province, parent and community involvement and integrated services and community development programming.

Saskatchewan's Integrated Services Program, introduced in 2000, is a successful approach for meeting the needs of the province's vulnerable children and youth. The program provides funding to schools and community partners that confer integrated supports for children and youth at risk of not succeeding in school or life. Three groups in particular are targeted: children and youth facing multiple risk factors; youth not attending school; and children and youth with emotional, behavioural and/or social problems.

British Columbia has adopted a number of strategies to improve access to post-secondary education. For instance, tuition fees have been frozen for five consecutive years; adult basic education is offered free of charge through the public school and post-secondary systems; almost 21 000 new student spaces have been created since 1996 at post-secondary institutions; three new universities have been established in the last decade; five universities have been created to improve regional access to undergraduate degrees; and increased core funding has been provided in 2001 to build and modernize provincial post-secondary institutions.

Institution-based training in British Columbia strengthens the role of post-secondary institutions by helping students who receive income assistance to acquire the skills necessary to move from economic dependence to independence. The program provides funds for British Columbia's colleges, universities and other post-secondary institutions to integrate individuals receiving income assistance into their instruction programs as students. The funding provided for each post-secondary institution is in the order of $150 000 to $250 000.

In the 1998 Budget, the Government of Ontario announced the Access to Opportunities Program, to respond to the shortage of skilled high-tech professionals in the province. The Program has created 23 000 new places for students enrolled in high-technology programs in Ontario colleges and universities. To provide increased access to degree programs, Ontario is ensuring that students are protected from the risk of financial loss, that new degree programs at universities are of the highest quality and that private universities are able to operate within the province. A Quality Assessment Board, to be established early in 2001, will assess new degree programs offered in Ontario and by out-of-province institutions. In addition, the introduction of the Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund will create a permanent endowment of $600 million to provide needs-based financial assistance to some 185 000 post-secondary students over the next 10 years.

### Council of Ministers of Education, Canada and Provincial Governments

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canad a is co-ordinating the submission of Canadian responses from six provinces and one territory to an Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) study on special education needs. The study — with data collection instruments developed by the OECD in conjunction with Eurostat and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) — will provide current information on students (from UNESCO member states, which include more than 180 countries worldwide) receiving additional resources to access the curriculum due to disabilities, learning or behavioural difficulties, and/or social disadvantages. The goals of the study are to establish internationally agreed upon and educationally relevant definitions pertaining to special educational needs; collect, validate, analyze and disseminate reliable and comparable statistics; and develop, calculate and disseminate policy-relevant education indicators in the domain of special educational needs.

In Canada, provincial policies, programs and services for students with disabilities have evolved considerably at post-secondary institutions. In British Columbia, for example, thousands of students with various disabilities are now able to access specialized programs and services throughout the public provincial post-secondary system. Measures to improve access to post-secondary education for students with disabilities include:

- increasing access to specialized services and resources for students with visual, hearing and learning disabilities;
- improving physical access to buildings in post-secondary institutions for students with disabilities;
- increasing awareness of the needs of students with disabilities regarding educational support services;
- improving the social integration of disabled students on campus; and
- establishing resource centres for students with disabilities at post-secondary institutions to help students achieve their educational goals and maximize their participation at these institutions.

In addition, the Vocational Rehabilitation Services program has existed for many years in British Columbia, providing support, assistance and access to training for persons with disabilities to ensure that they can develop employment skills and participate in the economy. The Program is now provided in conjunction with the Supports to Employment Program, which encourages individuals receiving disability allowances to join the labour force.

### Statistics Canada and Status of Women Canada

Statistics Canada and Status of Women Canada collaborated on the release of *Women and Men in Canada: A Statistical Glance*, which includes gender-based data on education and literacy of Canadians. In addition, Statistics Canada recently released *Women in Canada 2000: A Gender-Based Statistical Report*, which includes a detailed analysis of education, training and literacy issues for women in Canada.

### Human Resources Development Canada

Established in 1998, the National Literacy Secretariat works in concert with the provinces and territories, the literacy community, non-governmental organizations, business and labour to support five types of literacy activities that complement the literacy training provided by Canadian provinces:

- improving access to literacy programs;
- conducting research;
- sharing and co-ordinating information;
- raising awareness of literacy issues; and
- developing learning materials.

The Secretariat also works with a number of federal departments, such as Health Canada, the Department of Justice Canada and Corrections Canada, to promote literacy issues and develop initiatives specific to their jurisdictions.

In 1998, the Government of Canada announced the Canada Education Savings Grant program, which is designed to improve access to education by encouraging Canadian families to save for their children's post-secondary education. To encourage systematic saving over the long term, the Government of Canada, through Human Resources Development Canada, provides a grant of 20 percent on the first $2000 of annual contributions made to a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) for children up to 17 years of age. Upon attending a post-secondary educational institution, the beneficiary becomes eligible to receive the funds from the grants and accumulated tax-sheltered investment income held in the RESP. Currently, more than one million Canadian children have RESPs.

In 1998, the Government of Canada introduced The Canada Millennium Scholarships initiative to help Canadians gain access to post-secondary education. The Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation was established as an independent body to manage the $2.5 billion fund and provide some 100 000 scholarships annually to post-secondary students across Canada. That same year, the federal government also announced the Canadian Opportunities Strategy, a co-ordinated set of measures to expand access to higher education in Canada. Under the Strategy, the Canada Student Loans Program was improved to better assist Canadians in managing their student debt. Measures include tax relief for interest on student loans; interest relief for more graduates; an extended repayment period for those who need it; and debt reduction for borrowers who are encountering financial difficulties.

In addition to loans, HRDC offers (since 1995) non-repayable assistance in the form of Canada Study Grants to students with disabilities, high-need part-time students, female doctoral students enrolled in certain Ph.D. programs, and students with dependants to help with education-related expenses. During the loan year 1999-2000, some 65 000 Canada Study Grants were issued to students at a value of $98.6 million.

The Canada Student Loans Program also offers part-time loan assistance to help students cover education costs. The maximum part-time loan a student may have at any given time is $4000 (see www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/student_loans).

### Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) is Canada's federal funding agency for research and advanced training in the social sciences and humanities. In 1998, a joint initiative worth $2.5 million over five years with the National Literacy Secretariat was announced to stimulate applied research aimed at providing policy makers and practitioners with leading-edge knowledge in the area of literacy.

Valuing Literacy in Canada is fostering collaborative, multi-disciplinary research on a broad range of issues that affect adult learners' ability to participate fully in Canadian society and to respond to new economic and social challenges. This initiative is providing literacy specialists with solid applied research that will enhance the effectiveness of their work. It is also enabling policy makers to better target their strategies and practitioners to adapt their interventions so they may create successful learning environments.

## HEALTH, NUTRITION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD STRATEGIES

The Government of Canada has undertaken various initiatives to address health, nutrition and early childhood strategies development. These programs pay particular attention to women, minorities and vulnerable populations.

### Health Canada

Since 1990, Health Canada has supported the Comprehensive School Health Model and its application at the provincial, regional and school levels to support schools wishing to undertake an initiative to promote healthy living. In addition, Health Canada has developed the Voices and Choices School Health Model in response to schools and educational organizations requesting practical tools for implementing the Comprehensive School Health Model.

Voices and Choices is a strategic planning model consisting of a planning and implementation guide, a quantitative school health needs assessment questionnaire and a school health profile based on the data collected from the needs assessment. Voices and Choices involves students in developing school health plans and action plans built on the needs identified through the School Health Needs Assessment and Profile. The school health plans and action plans focus on the development of policies, programs and practices in the psycho-social and physical environments and support services to help develop positive, health-promoting behaviours and coping skills among youth.

Focus- and pilot-testing of Voices and Choices have confirmed its value and effectiveness as a tool in promoting student engagement and democracy. Through partnerships with national health and education organizations, this tool is being made available to schools and other organizations across Canada. Currently underway is the development of an on-line mechanism for accessing the School Health Model.

Health Canada has long played a leadership role in developing policies, guidelines, standards and awareness-raising programs on diet and nutrition. It has also played a role in fostering the development and adoption of those policies, guidelines and standards, including those implemented by provincial/territorial and municipal governments, non-governmental organizations, school boards, consumer groups and the private sector. Since 1995, Health Canada has developed a number of targeted resources based on *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating: Focus on Preschoolers* and *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating: Focus on Children Six to Twelve Years*, for example, now provide information for educators, health practitioners and others working with children. In 1999, *Nutrition for a Healthy Pregnancy: National Guidelines for the Childbearing Years* was released for use by a range of health professionals who regularly offer nutrition-related advice and guidance to women. From a population health perspective, these guidelines address issues of concern to women in their childbearing years, in preparation for and during the course of pregnancy. In 1996, Health Canada partnered with the Canadian School Boards Association to produce *Anaphylaxis: A Handbook for School Boards*. This widely used tool provides useful background information for developing policies for life-threatening allergies in schools.

The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program, created in 1995, is a comprehensive community-based program that supports pregnant women at risk of threatening their health and the development of their babies (i.e., women living in poverty, teens, women who use alcohol, tobacco or other harmful substances, women living in violent situations, Aboriginal women, recent immigrants, women living in social or geographic isolation or with limited access to services). The Program provides community-based groups with funds to support nutrition (e.g., food and/or vitamin/mineral supplements, counselling, food skills); knowledge and education (e.g., specialized counselling on prenatal health issues, breastfeeding and infant development); social support; and assistance with access to services (e.g., shelter, health care, specialized counselling). The Program is delivered through Health Canada regional offices, and managed jointly by the federal government and provincial/territorial governments.

The Community Action Program for Children, created in 1992, provides long-term funding to community coalitions for services that address the developmental needs of young children at risk (from birth to age six). In 1999, there were 490 projects across Canada — jointly managed by the federal government and provincial/territorial governments and delivered through Health Canada regional offices — delivering more than 1900 programs in cities, towns and remote areas in every province and territory across Canada. The program focusses on prevention and early intervention so that children get a better start in life. This in turn enhances their chances of participating fully in society as responsible adults.

Since 1995, Health Canada's Aboriginal Head Start Program has provided early intervention and school readiness for Aboriginal children and families in urban and Northern communities. In 1998, a major expansion of the Program to communities on reserves was undertaken. The Program aims to foster the spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical growth of the child as well as a desire for lifelong learning. The Program supports parents/guardians as the prime teachers and caregivers of children, and ensures their participation in the planning, development, operation and evaluation of the Program. There are currently more than 100 Aboriginal Head Start project sites across Canada.

The Nobody's Perfect program, developed in the early 1990s, is a national parent support and education program for parents of children from birth to age five. Nobody's Perfect is a culturally sensitive program designed to meet the needs of parents who are young, single, low-income, who may have limited education, or who are geographically or socially isolated. The program gives parents access to accurate up-to-date information on parenting and provides a supportive group network. The parent materials have been translated and printed in French and many other languages, including Spanish, for use with Canada's immigrant and refugee populations.

Health Canada is currently deploying a First Nations Health Information System to communities that will support program planning, delivery and evaluation, and contribute to the surveillance and overall assessment of health at the community, regional and national level. The First Nations Health Information System will provide the evidence required for effective policy and program planning and evaluation. More than 50 percent of First Nations communities now have the system in their health centres. In addition, Health Canada works with First Nations communities to implement telehealth as a means of reducing geographic barriers to accessing health services, medical specialists and education/professional support.

In July 1999, Health Canada and CMEC released an in-depth status report on HIV/AIDS prevention programs in Canadian education and public health systems. CMEC believes that schools must be part of a continuing, community-wide response to HIV/AIDS by teaching students about the risks, helping them to make responsible choices, and ensuring that young Canadians benefit from a safe and supportive environment.

Health Canada — through the Canadian Strategy on HIV/AIDS — provided funding for this first ever study. A group of researchers from across Canada catalogued and described the activities of education and public health systems at all levels, from policy makers to teachers to public health practitioners, to prevent HIV/AIDS and to support sexual health education. The Report based on this study will inform educators and health officials about the status of their efforts to prevent HIV/AIDS. CMEC and Health Canada will continue to work to support the provinces and territories in responding to the report by meeting with education and health ministry officials to discuss the results; hosting workshops to provide study results to community and professional organizations across Canada concerned with HIV/AIDS, sexuality, and youth health; working with provinces and territories to enhance curriculums and integrate HIV/AIDS and sexuality into more subjects and grade levels; developing new or better ways to support teachers and parents; and undertaking a follow-up to the 1989 Canada Youth and AIDS Study, which reported on the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours of teens and young adults around sexuality and HIV/AIDS.

In support of report recommendations, Health Canada has been working with community organizations to develop a youth awareness campaign about HIV/AIDS and sexual health. A parent education and awareness component will complement this youth-oriented awareness program.

CMEC has also been working to develop indicators to improve the capacity of school systems to monitor health education outcomes, as well as the social environment of schools. Some of the data from this study on the HIV/AIDS prevention program in Canadian education and public health systems will be useful to monitor future progress.

### Canadian International Development Agency

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will support a number of new education programs in the Americas. Among these is a $5 million (2001-2005) project designed to improve basic education in Peru's Piura Department. The project will help students at primary levels of selected rural areas to complete the school year at a normal age and with the basic required competencies.

In 1999, CIDA's Haiti Program developed a policy framework for education that details Canada's guiding principles, priorities and strategies for program delivery in Haiti. Support for primary school management, teacher training and skills upgrading at the primary school level has been designed as the main aspect of planned interventions.

In 1998-1999, CIDA contributed more than $1.2 million on a responsive basis to projects aimed at developing basic education standards. For example, CIDA provided $700 000 in funding to the Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation for a project that promotes basic education — including reading, writing, math and science — in Bolivia, Peru and Guatemala.

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**Establish or strengthen national or sub-national and, where applicable, subregional systems to evaluate the quality of education, which permit assessment of the performance of various educational actors, innovations and factors associated with achievements in learning. To that end, information and national or sub-national or, where applicable, subregional indicators will be made available that can be used to design, carry out and evaluate quality-improvement programs based on equity. Standards for reading and writing, mathematics and science shall receive special attention. Also, where appropriate, criteria and methodologies for collecting data that permit comparison of some educational indicators across countries in the Hemisphere shall be established.**

### Council of Ministers of Education, Canada

CMEC has undertaken several programs to evaluate education. Human Resources Development Canada supports a number of these initiatives as they help to ensure that Canadians have the knowledge and skills required to compete in the global economy. These include the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP); the Accessibility and Research component of the Public Expectations of Post-Secondary Education Project and the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program. These projects support the strengthening of accountability and building of Canadian expertise in the development of education outcome indicators.

To provide information on how well the education systems are meeting the needs of students and society, the provinces and territories, through CMEC, developed the SAIP to assess the performance of 13- and 16-year-old students in mathematics content and mathematics problem-solving, reading and writing, and science (see www.cmec.ca). Planning for administration began in 1991. Two full cycles of SAIP have been administered with mathematics being assessed in 1993 and 1997; reading and writing in 1994 and 1998; and science in 1996 and 1999. A third cycle is underway with the administration of mathematics in 2001 and writing in 2002. A review of SAIP activities was completed in October 2000. Review findings are currently being examined in order to devise recommendations to further enhance the program's value.

Under the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program, CMEC worked with the Government of Canada and other partners to create a full range of indicators to describe education and learning in Canada, from preschool through lifelong learning. The first report was published in 1996, and since that time, CMEC and Statistics Canada have consulted with ministries and departments of education across Canada about their information needs, and an updated indicator set has been developed to provide current data on the key inputs, processes, and outputs of education systems across Canada. A report on these indicators was published in early 2000 entitled *Education Indicators in Canada: Report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program 1999.*

Through the Accessibility and Research component of the Public Expectations of Post-Secondary Education Project, CMEC is working with all jurisdictions and key stakeholders to review barriers to accessing post-secondary education and identify ways to remove these. The accessibility project is part of CMEC's work initiated by ministers of education through their *Report on Public Expectations of Post-Secondary Education in Canada*, released in 1999. The report outlines expectations in the context of six overarching themes: quality, accessibility, mobility, relevancy and responsiveness, research and scholarship, and accountability.

In October 1998, CMEC approved Canada's participation in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) Cycle 1, to be administered in 2000. PISA's goal is to produce policy-oriented and internationally comparable indicators of student achievement. Cycle 1 assesses a sample of 15-year-old students in reading (the major domain) and in mathematics and science (the minor domains). The assessment has been undertaken in collaboration with Human Resources Development Canada, Statistics Canada and the provinces.

All of Canada's provinces are participating in both PISA and Canada's Youth in Transition Study (YITS), to obtain international and national data. PISA/YITS allows provincial comparisons in achievement and in student perceptions similar to the information obtained through the CMEC School Achievement Indicators Program. PISA/YITS, a comprehensive assessment program, is administered to about 33 000 students and includes student and principal questionnaires. Statistics Canada, through YITS, also contacts the parents of students participating in the study, and their responses are combined with the students' assessment results and questionnaire responses. It is expected that PISA/YITS will provide CMEC with a rich bank of data.

In addition to collaborating with CMEC, provinces and territories have undertaken quality evaluation in other areas. For example, in Ontario, the introduction of the Key Performance Indicators program at the post-secondary level is intended to measure the relationship between university or community college programs and job opportunities for graduates, with enhanced funding for programs demonstrating high graduation and placement rates and student and employer satisfaction.

Performance indicators have also been developed in British Columbia to measure how well post-secondary institutions are meeting the goals of relevance and quality, access, affordability and accountability set out in 1996 in *Charting a New Course: A Strategic Plan for the Future of British Columbia's College, Institute and Agency System*. In the university sector, work is being done to develop an accountability framework that spells out the outcomes the government expects from this sector.

Internationally, CMEC led the Canadian delegation to the planning meeting for Comparable Education Indicators in the Americas, held in Washington, D.C. (United States) in July 1999 to discuss the feasibility of developing education indicators for the Hemisphere. The meeting was initiated by Chile and the U.S. as a practical follow-up to the second line of action, in their capacity as members of the Group of 11. CMEC also participated in a meeting on educational assessment, held in Brazil in April 2000, and recommended that Canada continue contributing to this work, given its importance for Canadian education authorities and the expertise Canada has to offer.

**Develop comprehensive programs to improve and increase the level of professionalism among teachers and school administrators that combine pre-service and in-service training, exploring incentive mechanisms tied to updating their skills and to meeting such standards as may have been agreed upon. Higher education must collaborate in this endeavour through research and pedagogy, both of which should be strengthened in order to meet this goal.**

Curriculum reform depends on teachers having strong pedagogical knowledge of the disciplines they teach, on the developmental levels of students, and on the resources, including technology, at their disposal. In a rapidly changing, information-based global society, teachers must be fully up-to-date in their skills, knowledge and training, given the requirement for students to access information using new technologies and digital and print materials for resource-based instruction. Teachers must also be fully capable of transmitting to students the knowledge and skills necessary for them to prosper in a highly competitive global economy. To this end, a number of teacher training programs are being developed.

For example, the College of Teachers was established in 1997 at arm's length from the Ontario Ministry of Education to regulate the teaching profession, set professional requirements, discipline member-teachers where necessary, and ensure a consistent framework for teaching across the province. Minimum workload requirements for teachers have been defined to ensure appropriate classroom time for all students. A mandatory teacher testing program is under development to ensure that teachers know their curriculum subjects and the teaching methods expected of them. The Ministry will also be designing an induction program where new teachers can get coaching and support from more experienced colleagues as they begin their careers.

Changes to Alberta's regulations, Practice Review of Teachers Regulation, the Certification of Teachers Regulation, and the Superintendent of Schools Regulation, took effect in February 1999. Along with the Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy (1998), the development of the Quality Teaching Standard (1997) and the *School Act*, these changes constitute the most comprehensive competency, growth and teacher evaluation benchmarks in Canada. The Quality Teaching Standard ministerial order is the first of its kind in Canada. The Standard applies to teacher training and certification, professional development, supervision and evaluation. It describes the knowledge, skills and attributes or competencies required of Alberta teachers. All teachers are expected to meet the Quality Teaching Standard throughout their careers.

The Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy requires that teachers pursue lifelong learning and develop an annual professional growth plan. The policy also requires that principals evaluate any teacher who may not be meeting the Quality Teaching Standard.
In late 1998, Manitoba enhanced its teacher training programs by increasing the credit hour requirement for successful completion of a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree. The program went from a four-year concurrent model of 120 credit hours (i.e., education and arts and science courses taken together) to a five-year consecutive model of 150 credit hours (i.e., a three-year Bachelor of Arts followed by a two-year B.Ed.).

In Quebec, professionalization is the hallmark of teacher training. In 1996, the Ministry of Education defined a set of 11 occupational skills for the teaching profession, including specific references to professional competence in information technologies and continuing professional development. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills development focusses on helping future teachers integrate ICT into their teaching activities so that they can better prepare their students for the growing presence of technologies in all facets of life.

The Northwest Territories recognizes the importance of revising and introducing new curriculums to meet the educational needs of students, and the fact that teaching staff must be properly introduced to new curriculums and receive training and support to translate the curriculums into learning experiences. Because the roles are changing for teachers and principals as they now work more closely with the community, the professional development and training they obtain is reflecting these changing roles. Workshops are held at the territorial level to introduce and explain new or revised curriculum. Boards of education also hold workshops supported by the ministry.

In Nova Scotia, changing curriculums, coupled with the challenge of designing effective learning experiences for diverse students and the opportunities offered by new technologies to enhance teaching and learning, have highlighted the need for comprehensive, meaningful and high-quality professional development programs. This is creating a challenge for the Department of Education as time and cost, availability of substitute teachers, access, resources and the availability of specially tailored programs become issues. This is being addressed in two ways: first, targeted funding for professional development has been tied to key initiatives in areas such as ensuring literacy success, special education policy implementation and use of information technology across the curriculum. Second, special professional development funding was provided to an innovative Junior High School Network Project to support school-based improvement plans focussed on improving student learning.

Internationally, Canada took the lead on an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) study on the integration of information and communication technology through professional development for teachers, involving nine APEC economies. The project looked at the use of ICT from two standpoints: in the preparation and delivery of professional development programs for teachers, and in teaching teachers to use technology effectively as a learning tool.

Seven countries, including Canada, prepared a report on current trends and issues that was the focus of an educational workshop, held in Toronto (Canada) in December 1999. Participating countries were able to showcase their best practices — five of which were documented and presented (one from each region) to show the range of programs. Workshop participants learned of best practices that they will be able to apply to their own particular situations. The Canadian report was co-ordinated by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada and the workshop was organized by CMEC in conjunction with Human Resources Development Canada.

Immediately preceding the APEC workshop, CMEC organized a Canadian forum on teacher professional development in information and communication technology. Held in November 1999 in Toronto, the forum was organized in collaboration with Human Resources Development Canada's Office of Learning Technologies and Industry Canada's SchoolNet. The forum helped to identify a wide body of knowledge from a range of perspectives from which policy makers, program developers and service providers could draw to test the applicability of new approaches in their own economies. The forum also created an APEC network of expertise in the field and developed options for future co-operation in the delivery and evaluation of school-to-work interventions for youth risking unemployment. Planning is currently under way to follow up on forum recommendations.

In 1998, the Canadian International Development Agency initiated a $3.8 million project to support L'école nouvelle d'Artibonite in Haiti. The project is a pilot effort to strengthen local governance capacities in basic education by improving school governance and administrative management. Training is being provided for administrative and educational officials as well as for local parents so that they can be more effective participants in local decision making. The project will also help establish a decentralized school governance system for the up to 40 schools in the region of Artibonite.

As well, CIDA is implementing a project worth $5 million over five years (2000-2004) in Guyana — the Guyana Basic Education Teacher Training Project — to improve the quality of basic education and to strengthen the teacher training system. The project is consistent with the Guyanese Ministry of Education Policy and Five Year Development Plan (1995) for Guyana, which recommends the use of distance learning to ensure that at least 80 percent of all teachers at the primary and secondary levels are trained by the year 2000. About 40 percent of teachers at the primary level are academically unqualified — not having completed secondary school — and pedagogically untrained; about 80 percent of these are women.

**Strengthen preparation, education and training for the world of work so that an increasing number of workers can improve their standard of living and, together with employers, have the opportunity to benefit from hemispheric integration. In this regard, consideration will be given to the adoption of new technology based on different options and alternatives, ranging from specific occupational training to strengthening general employability competencies. Special attention will also be paid to the establishment or strengthening of mechanisms that permit workers to obtain certification of job-related competencies acquired through formal education and work experience. In order to confront changes in the labour market and to enhance employability prospects, actions that take into account the development of entrepreneurial skills will be included and will involve the different sectors and offer various options and alternatives.**

Changes in the economy and rapid advances in technology have created a new world of work. It is critical, therefore, for Canadians to have access to training opportunities. A unique feature of Canada's community college system is its link with business and industry to offer employment-related programs that include co-operative and continuing education courses.

For example, the Nova Scotia Community College and the University College of Cape Breton (UCCB) provide technical training that emphasizes quality, currency and relevancy. Apprenticeship curriculums are being updated and revised continuously to meet the needs of industry. In addition, UCCB is working with the Nova Scotia Department of Education Apprenticeship Training Division to develop a system of accreditation.

In Alberta, the Registered Apprentice Program enables students to begin apprenticeship training while still in school. Innovative programs are also in place to recognize prior learning, thus enabling qualified individuals to obtain advanced placement in apprenticeship programs.

The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Plan allows students to begin apprenticeships while earning high school diplomas. The Government of Ontario has expanded the program and more than doubled its funding since 1998. By broadening the apprenticeship system through the new *Apprenticeship and Certification Act*, the skills needs of industry and critical skills shortages experienced in some sectors will be addressed. Furthermore, the government has allocated funding over the next three years for a new Apprenticeship Innovation Fund to support updating classroom training for existing programs and introduce opportunities in new trades.

In order to support the transition from school to work, many Canadian provinces offer employment programs and services to students and youth. Manitoba, for instance, has been very successful in placing large numbers of students in career-related positions that offer valuable work experience through CareerStart, a program that provides wage incentives to help private sector employers create new, career-related summer jobs for full-time students and unemployed youth aged 16 to 24. To make it easier for youth to have access to career information, Manitoba has been providing an Internet-based Career Explorer Service to schools and employment and training agencies since April 1998.

In Saskatchewan, the JobStart/Future Skills program, established in 1995, links unemployed workers to jobs with Saskatchewan employers and assists industry in training workers in high-demand occupations. In addition, the 20 career and employment service centres located across the province provide a wide variety of employment-related programs and services, including the most comprehensive provincial job-matching program in Canada.

Canada is participating in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Thematic Review of Adult Learning, which will identify, analyze and compare cross-country experiences in adult learning, to better understand how policy and institutional environments might be made more supportive of adult learning. An expert review team will visit four provinces in early 2001 to gain a direct understanding of Canadian systems, building on a background report provided by Canada. A report will be produced summarizing their observations.

The Thematic Review of Adult Learning will review the adequacy of learning opportunities for adults, in order to better understand the participation and access to learning by adults. It will analyze:

- patterns of participation and non-participation in adult learning;
- the problems associated with current patterns of involvement;
- adult learning policy programs and institutional arrangements; and
- options that can be regarded as good practices and how and whether these can be applied more widely.

The review will also identify the analyses and data that are needed to ensure an informed public debate on adult learning.

**Council of Ministers of Education, Canada and Human Resources Development Canada**

From 1996 to 1999, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), in partnership with Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), participated in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) review of transitions from school to work. Canada's report is available on the CMEC Web site (www.cmec.ca/international/publications.stm).

**Human Resources Development Canada**

On behalf of Canada, HRDC co-hosted with the OECD the Lifelong Learning as an Affordable Investment Conference, in December 2000. The conference was attended by some 160 participants representing 21 OECD member nations and one observer country. A number of provinces were involved with the planning of the conference. Conference participants assessed the resource implications of a concerted lifelong learning approach to skills development, identified strategies for the financing of lifelong learning, shared best practices, and discussed areas for future policy research. The conference featured plenary sessions and workshops on lifelong learning, early childhood education, compulsory and upper secondary education, tertiary education, and workplace and adult learning.

Since 1996, HRDC's Office of Learning Technologies (OLT) has funded over 300 projects that use technologies to expand opportunities for skills development for adult learners in the workplace, at home or in their communities. In June 2000, OLT launched a new initiative — Learning Technologies in the Workplace — to help workplace organizations capitalize on the potential of learning technologies to develop and maintain a workforce with 21st Century employability skills. This new initiative is expected to fund about 20 projects per year.

In October 1999, HRDC also launched CanLearn Interactive (www.canlearn.ca), a bilingual Web-based, one-stop resource for learning information products and services that support informed decision making by Canadians in pursuit of learning and career goals. Developed in partnership with a number of provincial and territorial governments, 25 national learning stakeholder organizations, and several private sector corporations, CanLearn Interactive provides more than 30 interactive tools to help Canadians explore career possibilities, identify education and training requirements, develop learning strategies, and create financial plans to cover the costs of learning. Building upon the success of CanLearn Interactive, a partnership-based international education gateway will be designed to provide information and interactive planning tools to foreign students looking for Canadian learning opportunities. The site will include information about learning opportunities, visa requirements, health and medical considerations, links to international student and learning organizations, and interactive financial planning tools.

In addition, Human Resources Development Canada is involved in a number of major projects dealing with early childhood strategies.

The National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY) is a long-term, groundbreaking survey conducted in partnership by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and Statistics Canada, to monitor the development and well-being of Canada's children as they grow from infancy to adulthood. It is the definitive source of national data for research on child development in Canada.

The NLSCY is designed to follow a representative sample of Canadian children from 0 to 25 years of age, with data collection occurring at two-year intervals. The study provides, for the first time, a single source of data for the examination of child development in context, including the diverse life paths of normal development. The survey and research programs were developed to support evidence-based policy, using a human development view of the early decades of life. They seek to answer such fundamental questions as "Can good early child outcomes of development predict later success?" and "If so, are we under-investing in children?"

Understanding the Early Years (UEY) is a research initiative, based on the NLSCY, that takes measuring and monitoring of child well-being to the community level and helps communities assess how well they are helping children to be ready to learn at school entry. UEY is currently running in 13 communities. It consists of three research instruments: an Early Development Instrument (EDI) questionnaire filled out by kindergarten teachers on their students; an enhanced version of the NLSCY questionnaire for parents; and a community mapping study that identifies existing early childhood development resources in the community. Together, these research tools provide a comprehensive picture of how a community's children are doing to age 6 and how well a community supports early childhood development (i.e., programs and services in place). This is a research project involving teachers, parents, guardians and community agencies. It helps communities understand how their children are doing and how best to respond to their needs. With the research results, communities will put in place action plans that will help their children — both before and after they enter school — to reach their full potential.

This project supports the Government of Canada's commitment to build on our knowledge of how childhood experiences shape learning, health and well-being for a lifetime. Total cost of the UEY research initiative to date is $10.3 million from Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC).

Child Care Visions is a national contributions program that has supported studies related to child care practices and service delivery models. The program is presently being adapted to support and facilitate work related to early childhood development practices and sector capacity, consistent with Canada's commitment to a National Children's Agenda.

The Intercountry Adoption Services Unit provides national level co-ordination and consultative services to provinces and territories (except Quebec), within the framework of the Hague Convention on International Adoptions.

The First Nations and Inuit Child Care program is designed to bring the quality and quantity of child care services for First Nations and Inuit communities into line with child care services available to the general population.

Other significant initiatives involving early childhood strategies are the National Children's Agenda and the National Child Benefit. They are discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

### Industry Canada

In 1996, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council — Canada's federal funding agency for university-based research and graduate training in the social sciences and humanities — and Industry Canada launched five research networks (over five years) in education and training. The goal of this initiative is to bring together researchers from universities across the country with representatives from community organizations, private sector organizations, international research enterprises, and provincial/territorial governments and school boards. The five networks are: 1) the Education, Training and Employment Research Network; 2) the Network for the Evaluation of Education and Training Technologies; 3) the Research Network for New Approaches to Lifelong Learning; 4) the Labour Training Research Network; and 5) the Western Education and Training Research Network.

### Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

In collaboration with Industry Canada and the Department of Finance, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) is developing a major initiative to mobilize Canadian researchers to build knowledge, expertise and tools for the new economy, including:

– strengthening the capacity for evidence-based decision making on educational issues, including the interface between formal education and the labour market and lifelong learning;

– increasing knowledge of the management of new economy business and improving the skills necessary for the effective management of knowledge and knowledge workers; and

– training and improving the research environment of the next generation of Canadian researchers focussing on the new economy.

This initiative, announced in the October 2000 Economic Statement, will be managed by SSHRC and represents a new investment of $100 million from 2001 to 2006 for research and capacity building relating to the new economy.

SSHRC also just completed its five-year support cycle for five major research networks in education and training. Launched in 1996, the networks involve more than 140 university researchers working closely with representatives from some 150 community organizations, private sector companies, and international research enterprises, as well as with representatives from various provincial government departments and school boards. The network teams, whose fields of expertise encompass a wide range of disciplines — from sociology and educational psychology to engineering and computer science — are examining strategies, programs and policies aimed at meeting the current and future educational requirements of Canadians in different walks of life. Major areas of study include the structures and processes of education, learning factors and outcomes, vocational and professional training providers, and training delivery. A key goal is to identify the links between learning and economic success, between training and Canada's international competitiveness, and between education, innovation and the evolving training needs of Canadians. As previously stated, the five networks are: 1) Education, Training and Employment Research Network; 2) Network for the Evaluation of Education and Training Technologies; 3) Research Network for New Approaches to Lifelong Learning; 4) Labour Training Research Network; and 5) Western Education and Training Research Network.

### Status of Women Canada

As stated in the 1995 Federal Plan for Gender Equality, the Government of Canada supports women in the field of science and technology. In an effort to retain a diverse population of science and technology workers, some federal government departments are undertaking an evaluation of the population of science and technology workers within their ranks. The June 1999 *Women in Federal Science and Technology Working Group Report* examined the issues of recruitment, retention, balancing work and family, and career development.

Status of Women Canada (SWC), a federal government agency, funds women's groups that research and promote issues related to lifelong learning, education and training, including access for Aboriginal women, women with disabilities, and women in small and rural communities. With financial assistance from SWC, non-governmental organizations have undertaken initiatives to build awareness and encourage women to participate actively in the political life of their communities by, for example, seeking positions on various boards.

In 1999, the SWC-commissioned paper *Women in the Knowledge-Based Economy and Society* and the SWC roundtable on Women in the Knowledge-Based Economy and Society recommended equal access to lifelong learning, on-the-job training and science and technology occupations.

### Health Canada

Through the Indian and Inuit Health Careers Program, Health Canada supports Aboriginal participation in educational opportunities leading to professional careers in the health field. Program strategies designed to achieve these outcomes include career-related employment and on-the-job training opportunities, summer students and role model programs, and community-based career fairs and promotion. In addition, the national component of the program offers financial assistance in the form of bursaries and scholarships to Canadians of Aboriginal ancestry, to pursue professional careers in the health sciences, including medicine, nursing and physiotherapy.

In 2000-2001, Health Canada is intensifying its efforts to recruit Aboriginal students at the post-secondary level into nursing careers and professional nurses to work in northern Aboriginal communities. It has launched an advertising campaign using different media and is exploring the potential of recruiting new post-secondary graduates for internships followed by clinical skills training; it is also assessing the feasibility of subsidizing third and fourth year Aboriginal baccalaureate nursing students.

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**Establish or improve, according to their internal legal framework, educational strategies relevant to multicultural societies, so as to be able to shape, with the participation of indigenous populations and migrants, models for bilingual and inter-cultural basic education. Similarly, the content of basic education will have to be enhanced, together with respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity of peoples, as well as to expand the knowledge of the different languages spoken in the countries of the Hemisphere, where resources and possibilities permit.**

Canada's education systems are striving to support students who face additional challenges through special needs and language programs and increased sensitivity to and awareness of how different cultural and linguistic environments may affect students.

Over the years, immigration to Canada has affected education systems through its impact on enrolments and has created the need for second language training programs for school-aged immigrants. As a result of the programs Canada has developed to respond to this issue it is now considered an expert in this field.

Additional language competencies also enhance the future success of high school graduates as they take their place as global citizens and contribute to the province's economic well-being. Although English is widely perceived to be the "language of business," the growing economic strength of non-English-speaking countries points to the need to do business in different languages and to understand different cultures. Language training can help meet both of these needs and is offered across Canada.

For example, in February 2000, Alberta announced its goal to increase the proportion of students studying a second language from 25 to 33 percent as part of the government's new economic strategy to prepare Albertans for the growing global economy. Measures to increase both the numbers of students enrolled in second-language training (in secondary schools and post-secondary institutions) and improve completion rates are currently being developed.

In Quebec, a new mainstreaming and intercultural education policy was introduced in 1998. The policy sets operational lines intended to guide schools in integrating immigrant students into their institutions and into Quebec society and in teaching all students how to live together. The three-pronged policy promotes equality of opportunity, mastery of French as the common language of public life and citizenship in a plural society. The policy also contains an action plan suggesting concrete measures for 1998-2000. The review of study programs in the light of reforms currently underway has helped to include cultural diversity and civics in the curriculum. In 1999-2000, more than 9 percent of all students in Quebec had a mother tongue other than English or French.

Many provinces across Canada, outside Quebec, promote and offer French-language programs to elementary and secondary students. In 1994-1995, Manitoba established the Division Scolaire Franco-manitobaine, which now oversees the operations of 21 of the 28 French-language schools in the province. As well, there are 100 schools offering French immersion programs to Manitoba students.

In British Columbia, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology provide funding for foreign-language training. Public schools in the province offer language training in a range of languages, including French, Spanish, German, Punjabi and Mandarin. Public post-secondary institutions also provide a wide range of opportunities for studying languages through both credit and non-credit courses and other programs.

The presence of international students in Canadian classrooms helps to enrich the learning environment, enhances the educational experience of all students, and contributes to the social and economic development of the province's communities. In 1999, more than 12 000 international students were studying at British Columbia's public post-secondary institutions. Since British Columbia's share of international students is currently at about 26 percent, school districts in British Columbia actively recruit international students. As a result, some 1500 international students are currently studying in elementary and secondary schools there. International education exchange programs such as these are contributing to Canada's overall goal to promote post-secondary education across international borders and create far-reaching cultural and economic benefits for the new knowledge skills economy. British Columbia compares well with other areas of Canada regarding the number of international students who choose to study in the province.

In Alberta, students learn about citizenship and their Canadian heritage through the social studies curriculum. While Canadian content comprises about 60 percent of the social studies program, students also learn about Canada's international relations as well as global issues, including the impact of technology. The program is compulsory from grades one to 12 and is being revised to ensure that students continue to develop the knowledge and skills required for responsible citizenship in the changing global environment. Also, Aboriginal perspectives are being incorporated into social studies, science and other new programs as curriculums are updated and instructional materials revised to ensure they promote understanding and respect for people from diverse cultures. Increased emphasis is being placed on lifelong learning, applying learning to daily life situations, cross-curricular connections and career-planning skills. Information and communication technology skills are also being infused into new programs. Alberta continues to have provincial testing in grades three, six, nine and 12, and these are also being revised to reflect changes in the curriculum and to ensure that Canadians can compete successfully in the global economy.

### Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) programs offer newly arrived immigrants the opportunity to learn one of Canada's official languages. CIC also has promotional programs that help to counter prejudice against newcomers and encourage the Canadian-born to embrace diversity and welcome immigrants to their new home.

### Canadian Heritage

The Assembly of First Nations — the national representative organization of over 630 Aboriginal communities in Canada — agrees that the preservation of First Nations languages is a key priority requiring action. First Nations languages education and training include immersion and bilingual programs, mentoring programs, language authority councils, and the development of curriculum, courses, materials and instructional aids. Canadian Heritage is providing $20 million over the next five years to revitalize and maintain Aboriginal languages for future generations by increasing the number of Aboriginal language speakers and expanding the domains in which these languages are spoken.

Since 1998, the Aboriginal Languages Initiative provides funding to increase the number and quality of Aboriginal language projects in Aboriginal communities; increase the number of communities and individuals involved in Aboriginal language activities; and support the development of long-term strategies for the revitalization and maintenance of Aboriginal languages.

Under its Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) announced in June 1998, Canadian Heritage is providing $20 million in funding for 1998-2002 to support the revitalization and maintenance of Aboriginal languages. ALI is inclusive of all Aboriginal peoples and is responsive to different community needs, circumstances and priorities. The Initiative is managed and delivered by the Assembly of First Nations, the Métis National Council and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada and is designed to complement rather than replace or duplicate existing federal or provincial/territorial language education programs.

Under three co-operation agreements on the development and enhancement of Aboriginal languages, Canadian Heritage is allotting $9.5 million for 1999-2004 for the preservation of Aboriginal languages in the Northwest Territories, $5.5 million over 1998-2003 for the enhancement of eight Aboriginal languages in the Yukon, and $2.2 million for 1999-2001 for the development of the Inuit language in the Nunavut Territory.

In partnership with the Canadian Teachers Federation, Canadian Heritage supports the Mathieu Da Costa Awards Program. The goal of the Program, initiated in 1996, is to increase awareness among students of the contributions that groups and individuals from diverse backgrounds have made to enrich Canada. The Multiculturalism Program also provides funding and technical assistance to school boards and other educational institutions in order to ensure culturally sensitive educational programs in diverse communities.

Canadian Heritage partners with the Official Languages Commission — whose mandate is to ensure recognition of the status of English and French as Canada's two official languages — to encourage the development of the official-language minority communities. In March 1999, Canadian Heritage announced an additional $70 million investment in federal official-languages support programs. This represents a 31 percent annual increase and brought the budget for these programs to $293.5 million per year. This investment will provide additional resources to support official-language minority communities, and will provide support to provinces for services in crucial areas such as health. This announcement included $50 million in new funds for both minority-language and second-language teaching. These minorities include francophones across Canada, and anglophones in the province of Quebec.

Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act* commits the Government of Canada to enhancing the vitality of the English and French official-language minority communities of Canada and to fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society; Section 42 gives the Canadian Heritage minister the mandate to promote a co-ordinated approach to the implementation of this commitment. Implementation of Sections 41 and 42 of the Act, therefore, is an ongoing responsibility. Under a multilateral protocol signed with the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and annual bilateral agreements concluded with each of the provincial and territorial governments, the Government of Canada provides financial support for part of the supplementary costs incurred in order to offer minority official-language instruction programs, including immersion. The mandate of these agreements is to help the provinces and territories provide the members of minority official-language communities with an education in their mother tongue, and provide Canadians with the opportunity to learn English and French as a second language at the elementary and secondary levels.

As well, CMEC administers two national programs — the Summer Language Bursary Program (SLBP), launched in 1971, and the Official Language Monitor Program (OLMP) established in 1973 — funded by Canadian Heritage. Under the SLBP, students who have completed Grade 11 and post-secondary students receive bursaries to enable them to take a five-week intensive course in their second official language. Also under the program, French-speaking minorities living outside Quebec can receive bursaries to study in French. The OLMP offers full-time post-secondary students the opportunity to obtain part-time or full-time work in another province or territory (under the supervision of teachers) to help students with second-language studies. Full-time monitors are placed in rural or semi-urban areas. Under the program there is also a sub-component for French-language schools outside Quebec.

### Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Since its establishment in 1995, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's (SSHRC) Immigration and the Metropolis Program supports four university-based research centres on immigration and integration. The Program is funded by SSHRC and a consortium of seven federal government departments and agencies, led by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The four centres are receiving a total of $8 million over six years, until 2002.

The Metropolis Centres — located in Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver — are a made-in-Canada concept with no equivalent internationally that brings together more than 250 community organizations, with some 240 projects underway involving close to 300 researchers. The Program's research projects, developed in collaboration with community partners, are providing information to develop and assess immigration and integration policies and to help improve services. The Centres are now at the point of consolidating their respective strategies and moving toward national comparative studies to strategically feed policy development. This should lead to a greater capacity to undertake international comparative studies.

Two-way communication between researchers and decision makers are fostered through conferences, workshops, seminars and other face-to-face exchanges. These opportunities are allowing participants to engage in meaningful dialogue, exchange information and examine policy issues together. In addition, the program has created an award-winning, interactive network of Web sites, co-managed by universities and government agencies. More traditional communication methods including newsletters, bulletins and other publications are also employed extensively.

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**Develop, within and outside schools, with the assistance of families and other actors and social organizations, educational strategies that foster the development of values, with special attention to the inclusion of democratic principles, human rights, gender-related issues, peace, tolerance and respect for the environment and natural resources.**

All educational ministries in Canadian provinces and territories have policies designed to promote tolerance, respect for human rights, and learning about the wealth and diversity of cultural identities. In addition, there are various approaches to enhancing democratic participation in educational institutions and promoting co-operation between educational institutions and the local community, including families, workplaces, the media, and non-governmental organizations.

Educational institutions in British Columbia have established policies that seek to create an environment where all people are treated with dignity and respect, and where tolerance and equity can be realized. As spelled out in their policies, institutions are committed to the principle that all people, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, colour, religion or disability, have a right to equal opportunity in education and employment. These institutions are also committed to identifying and removing any discriminatory barriers that can prevent access to equal opportunity in education and employment.

Saskatchewan Education has implemented a policy on multicultural education. The policy contains 22 goals for multicultural education grouped into the areas of self-concept development, understanding and relating to others, spiritual development, and membership in society. Through Saskatchewan Education's social studies curriculum, students from grades one to 12 engage in activities that promote the understanding that all persons are unique and important. They learn that while all groups of people have differences, they also have similarities. They also learn that the differences are what make Canada a culturally rich and diverse nation.

Various provinces participated in the Montreal International Seminar on Intercultural and Multicultural Education that took place at the University of Quebec at Montreal in fall 1999. The conference was organized by the Centre d'études sur le droit international et la mondialisation on behalf of the United Nations Sub-Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. Provincial participation was facilitated by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. There were 16 recommendations, including recognizing the benefits of including courses from a minority perspective in curriculums, reviewing the way history is taught, and the promotion of linguistic rights. The proceedings of the seminar are published in the *Revue québécoise de droit international*.

Canada hosted the 14th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers in Halifax in November 2000. CMEC and the Nova Scotia Department of Education organized the event. The theme of the conference was Education in a Global Era: Challenges to Equity, Opportunities for Diversity and related to the pan-Commonwealth need to expand educational opportunity to meet a diversity of situations.

Prior to the conference, each Commonwealth country was invited to share information on educational achievements and challenges that have occurred since the previous Commonwealth conference. The Canada Country paper was written by CMEC, and drew on the input of the 13 provincial and territorial jurisdictions, federal government departments, and non-governmental organizations involved in education and lifelong learning. Conferences of Commonwealth education ministers are held every three to four years in different parts of the Commonwealth.

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada is currently updating its report to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on the application of the Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights, Democracy, International Understanding and Tolerance. UNESCO asks member countries to report every six years. The latest report, prepared in collaboration with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, will be completed in 2001. Preliminary findings indicate that the most noticeable trend has been a much higher level of integration of the themes of peace, democracy, human rights, international understanding, and tolerance in both formal and non-formal education programs.

### Canadian Heritage

On December 10, 1998, Canada and others celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document that outlines the rights of all people of the world. In recognizing this important anniversary, Canadian Heritage developed the CREDO Web site (www.pch.gc.ca/credo), designed to give young people across Canada an opportunity to create what they consider to be their fundamental human right. As part of the CREDO initiative, young

Canadians have also participated in various community and school events to discuss the value and significance of human rights.

### Canadian International Development Agency

Overseas, the Canadian International Development Agency is implementing a six-year (until 2004), $25 million project to strengthen the Caribbean region's capacity to compete in the global economy through human resources and institutional development. This project will assist Jamaica, Guyana and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) member states in meeting the demands of their labour markets by offering training opportunities to strengthen managerial, technical and vocational skills and by developing the capacity of regional institutions to deliver various forms of skills training. A regional component will permit regional training and thus maximize resources, avoid duplication of national efforts and allow selected institutions outside Jamaica, Guyana and the OECS to improve the delivery of training and facilitate regional co-operation in human resources development for enhanced competitiveness.

**Promote access to and use of the most effective information and communication technologies in education systems, with special emphasis on the use of computers, in combination with revised pedagogical methods and proper training for teachers in the use of these technologies. Special attention shall be paid to the ethical imperative of including the most vulnerable sectors. To that end, distance education programs shall be strengthened and information networks established.**

Canada is committed over the next five years to creating and strengthening learning opportunities through an expanded SchoolNet — a modern communication infrastructure aimed at linking all Canadian schools and libraries to the Internet. SchoolNet readies learners for the knowledge-based society. It champions lifelong learning and the creation of world-class educational resources through information and communication technology and partnerships.

In the years ahead, virtual school programs offered over the Internet are expected to have a significant impact on student mobility and on the delivery of post-secondary education in general, as more educational institutions in Canada and abroad offer programs students can have access to without leaving home.

In Canada, all provincial and territorial ministries of education use new information and communication technology to help students acquire the skills they need for full participation in an increasingly knowledge-based society. Generally, there are more computers available to students in higher grades than lower grades.

In February 1999, for instance, there was one computer for every nine elementary students, compared with one for every eight lower-secondary students, and one for every seven upper-secondary students. All Canadian schools have widespread access to the Internet for instructional purposes. About 88 percent of elementary students attended schools that have Internet access, as did more than 97 percent of students in secondary schools. In Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, all schools were connected. One third of elementary and lower-secondary students and one half of upper secondary students had used e-mail for different learning purposes.

Moreover, 76 percent of elementary students, 80 percent of lower-secondary and 87 percent of upper-secondary students had, as part of their school activities, extracted information from the Internet. The percentage of students who had undertaken to design and maintain a Web site ranged from 9 percent at the elementary level to 53 percent of upper-secondary students.

Technology allows for distance access to learning for widely dispersed individuals and groups, who may share a language and culture, but do not have access to classes where they live. Schools need to have technology in place to provide access to information and courses. Such access in an educational environment can also help to overcome the barriers many children face due to poverty at home.

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**Make efforts to increase the availability of teaching materials in collaboration with official institutions and, depending on the specific conditions in each country, with the private sector.**

In September 1999, Ministers of Education of the Americas agreed to work together in the area of French-language education in a minority setting. In October 2000, a study was commissioned to examine the performance results and contextual information of 13- and 16-year-old French-speaking students on the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP); as well, a kit was prepared for use by teachers of kindergarten to Grade 2 in order to address the particular needs of French-speaking Canadians in a minority-language situation.

Canadian Heritage, Health Canada and other government departments have provided funding to the Media Awareness Network, which provides both curriculum-related media-and Web-literacy teaching materials for schools, and media-awareness resources for community organizations. Heritage Canada also funds the development of diversity curriculums and the development of anti-racism teachers' guides for the Racism Stop It! program.

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**Seek to use technology to link schools and communities as a way of establishing ties in the Hemisphere while encouraging the participation of higher education institutions that have advantages in this field.**

## DISTANCE LEARNING

The Northwest Territories (NWT) is a region where geography has always presented a major challenge to program delivery. The NWT government is working with other partners across the North to combine radio, television, computers, satellite technology, libraries and other services into a pan-northern system of information networks to address this challenge. As part of this approach, the NWT Department of Education plans to develop computer operating systems in Aboriginal languages. This will enable people across the Northwest Territories to have access to information networks.

Saskatchewan schools are connected to the Internet, and school divisions — through Saskatchewan Education — are developing Web-based student learning materials. In addition, the Saskatchewan Communications Network has 20 years of experience in the televised delivery of university and technical/vocational courses to more than 50 communities.

Saskatchewan Education is committed to increasing access to technology-enhanced learning opportunities; as a participant in the Community Access Program, public access to the Internet in schools has been offered to communities across rural and northern Saskatchewan. The Department maintains a comprehensive Web site (www.sasked.gov.sk.ca) and provides curriculum guides on-line for the use of students, teachers and other members of the community. Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training is working with provincial post-secondary education institutions and other agencies to enhance the quality of programs and extend access by various means, through effective use of technology, both on- and off-campus. The provincial plan for technology-enhanced learning includes an expanded array of on-line courses, enhanced credit transfer arrangements, streamlined admissions and registration procedures, and support services for learners in their own communities. This builds on existing distance-education practices using formats such as satellite television, audio-conferencing and computer conferencing, which have been in place for more than a decade, and is also designed to complement and make use of the province-wide public-sector network, CommunityNet.

The CommunityNet initiative will bring affordable high-speed Internet connections to all schools, health care facilities, and government offices in over 250 centres, including reserves and northern communities, throughout the province. The project will see technology and infrastructure upgrades made possible through public sector co-operation to form one anchor tenant that pools its resources to achieve common goals. The initiative will help improve social, community, and economic development in rural and remote areas of the province.

Alberta's Athabaska University, as Canada's first university delivering services through distance education, has long been a leader in technology-mediated learning. Projects are currently in place to incorporate digital learning and other technologies into the education system. One plan is to connect all schools, universities, libraries, community centres, hospitals and municipalities across the province to a wide-area network within three years.

At the elementary and secondary levels, the British Columbia Ministry of Education recognizes that the Internet is a powerful tool for education in the global era. In April 1998, an investment of $123 million over six years was announced to connect the province's 1800 public schools and 134 college campuses to the Provincial Learning Network. The Network allows students and educators to use resources on the Internet, to enrol in courses not offered locally, and to participate in virtual field trips without leaving their classrooms. The system is also available to independent schools, public libraries, museums, science and cultural organizations and 20 community-skill centres. The Network is intended to be the largest centrally managed educational network in North America, serving 400 communities throughout British Columbia. The Network received the first Information Technology Project of the Year Award in May 2000 from the Canadian Information Processing Society.

Educational technology has become an integral part of the teaching and learning processes at public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia to increase access to post-secondary education through distributed learning. The majority of institutions in the province offer courses that use educational technology to enhance delivery. Several hundred courses are available on-line to students who wish to pursue studies through distributed learning. British Columbia is considered to be one of the world leaders in distance education. For example, the Open Learning Agency offers open learning courses and programs through the Open College and Open University to learners throughout the world. In addition, the province continues to develop an Educational Technology Policy Framework which identifies key policy areas and measures to guide the post-secondary, university college and institute system in the strategic development of educational technology.

In April 1995, Manitoba created a special operating agency called the Manitoba Education Research and Information Network to deliver, support and promote the use of those technology infrastructures that enable the delivery of quality education and training for all Manitobans. The agency provides direction and management in the educational use of telecommunications networks, acting as a broker of services to meet customer needs. It provides service offerings that support educational institutions (elementary, secondary and post-secondary) in the application of technological tools to enhance and expand program delivery, and identifies — in partnership with the private sector and economic development agencies — economic development opportunities resulting from the use of technology in education and training applications.

Nova Scotia aims to make education and training more accessible in communities through the effective use of technology and by restructuring education systems to improve their quality and efficiency. The development of a learning culture will enable all Nova Scotians to participate in the changing global economy.

In 1996-1997, Quebec's ministry of education implemented an action plan to integrate information and communication technologies (ICT) in teaching and learning at the pre-school, elementary and secondary levels. ICT are considered to be tools and resources for learning in the province's new education program as they constitute the means of communication that will put young people in touch with the rest of the planet.

Quebec's Télé-université has been providing distance university education since 1972 and initiated on-line teaching well in advance of other institutions. Students from Quebec, other parts of Canada and the world are represented in an enrolment of 20 000 in 2000. Télé-université offers courses through the Internet and using other interactive technologies. Two other distance-learning institutions, the Centre collégial de formation à distance and the Société de formation à distance des commissions scolaires du Québec, offer programs at the college and secondary levels respectively. The three institutions belong to a distance-learning liaison committee that promotes Quebec distance learning internationally.

The Information Economy Initiative was announced in Nova Scotia in May 1998 as a $65 million project involving public schools, universities and community access. As of February 1999, every school in Nova Scotia was connected to the Internet. By June 2001, a total of 6136 computer systems will have been installed in schools across the province.

In addition, as part of a broader scheme called Connecting Canadians, the Government of Canada has introduced initiatives that promote the development and use of information technology in education. Human Resources Development Canada's (HRDC) CanLearn Interactive Web site is the first pan-Canadian educational information resource created through the co-operation of the federal, provincial and territorial governments. It is linked to Industry Canada's SchoolNet (a communication infrastructure aimed at connecting all Canadian schools and libraries to the Internet) and Computers for Schools programs. Education is a provincial and territorial responsibility, and through this collective effort Canadians have been provided with a truly comprehensive resource — one that brings all Canadian education and training information together under one umbrella for the benefit of all Canadians.

HRDC's collaboration with other levels of government and non-governmental organizations and the private sector, toward a common goal of creating a single-window resource has resulted in a more effective information product for Canadians than would be possible through isolated efforts. This has demonstrated the extent to which multiple stakeholders can successfully work in collaboration to develop programs and services that truly meet the needs of their constituents. Thus, CanLearn Interactive is currently the most popular Web site in Canada for information on the selection and financing of education. Since its launch in October 1999, the site has had more than 300 000 user sessions and has grown to include 30 interactive products and 60 000 pages of information. CanLearn Interactive won the Impact Award 2000 for Changing the Way People Learn. The Impact Award honours Canadian Web sites that use innovation, imagination and determination to better the lives of Canadians.

Building on the CanLearn Interactive partnership model, HRDC plans to develop and launch an international gateway Web site as a mechanism for further collaboration to promote Canada as a learning destination and leading-edge innovator in providing educational services to foreign students.

HRDC's Office of Learning Technologies (OLT) was established in 1996. It seeks to build a culture of lifelong learning for the new economy. It acts as a catalyst for innovation in technology-enabled learning and skills development and has supported 300 projects across Canada to test, research and assess innovative uses of learning technologies to reduce barriers to learning; assist Canadians in upgrading and acquiring new skills and expanding opportunities for learning in the workplace; and help communities offer multi-point access to a variety of learning resources.

The OLT has established funding programs in three key areas:

New Practice in Learning Technologies (NPLT) - The NPLT funds projects that contribute to the understanding, development and awareness of new effective practices in using technologies with adult learners, particularly with those who traditionally face barriers to learning.

Community Learning Networks (CLN) - In partnership with community organizations, CLN supports pilot projects that develop new models or enhance existing exemplary models to promote and increase access to learning opportunities within and across communities through the use of technologies.

Learning Technologies in the Workplace (LTW) - The LTW funds projects that expand opportunities for learning and skills development in the workplace through the implementation of technology-enabled learning solutions for workers.

**Industry Canada**

The Government of Canada, through Industry Canada's Office of International Partnerships, shares its connectivity programs and strategy with other hemispheric partners and works closely with them in the implementation of their own connectivity agenda and initiatives. For example, in 1998, the Government of Argentina requested Canadian assistance in the design of their Federal Information System for Production Program (similar to Industry Canada's Strategis — a Web site designed to provide business and consumer information to all Canadians without the constraints of time and geography), a digital collections program, and a community access program (similar to Canada's Connectedness programs, which include Canada On-Line, Smart Communities, Canadian Content On-Line, Electronic Commerce, Canadian Governments On-Line, Connecting Canada to the World).

In 1999, a group of Canadian experts from Industry Canada were invited to Santiago (Chile) to conduct presentations on Canada's connectivity agenda to a broad Chilean audience, including representatives from the Ministry of Economy. During this mission, Canada signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Chile to further advance Chile's connectivity Agenda. Chile's Enlaces program is now working with Industry Canada's SchoolNet (a communication infrastructure aimed at connecting all Canadian schools and libraries to the Internet) for content development, teacher training and community involvement.

Industry Canada is a leader in the federal government's effort to encourage the use of information technology to build Canadian skills and knowledge as well as promote economic competitiveness and social well-being. The objectives of the Connecting Canadians initiative include:

- developing a telecommunications infrastructure that will increase networking and access to knowledge and information in order to help Canadians become more entrepreneurial and innovative and thus promote economic development;

- providing technology-related skills to youth that will improve their prospects for meaningful employment in the new networked economy; and

- increasing quality Canadian content on the information highway and fostering Canadians' awareness of the economic and social benefits of the information highway.

Canada's SchoolNet — led by Industry Canada in a partnership with the education community, various levels of government and the private sector — connects schools, students, teachers and families to the Information Highway and acts as a catalyst, fuelling the development of both content and the effective use of information and communication technology in learning. SchoolNet initiatives are designed to:

– accelerate the deployment of affordable telecommunications infrastructure to the learning community;

– stimulate the development of on-line resources and products by the education community and the software sector;

– ensure educators and learners have the skills needed to harness ICT for learning;

– recognize and showcase exemplary models and best practices and raise the awareness of the importance of ICT in learning; and

– develop export opportunities for Canadian products and expertise.

In March 1999, Canada became the first nation to connect its schools and libraries to the Internet through the efforts of SchoolNet and its partners. The SchoolNet Web site (www.schoolnet.ca) includes more than 8000 Internet learning resources that are indexed for easy retrieval and maintained by a network of school boards across Canada to ensure their relevance to curriculums, their appropriateness and their timeliness. Through the SchoolNet Youth Employment Initiative, more than 2500 young Canadians have helped educators and librarians across the country integrate information and communication technology into their learning programs. Participants have an excellent rate of employment — at about 83 percent — in their field of interest after their work terms, having gained multimedia and technology skills, as well as experience in training and education. In September 1998, SchoolNet was recognized by the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management as one of the most innovative and relevant public sector initiatives internationally.

SchoolNet has developed various other initiatives since 1998:

– The First Nations SchoolNet initiative is connecting Aboriginal schools to the Internet using satellite connectivity. The program also provides technical expertise to support the expansion of the network and the development of on-line learning resources that respond to the cultural needs of First Nations communities. The initiative has been made possible through a partnership with major Canadian telephone companies and Telesat — a world leader in satellite communication and systems management.

– The SchoolNet GrassRoots Program offers teachers and students an opportunity to build the Information Highway by designing and implementing their own on-line projects. Teachers receive between $300 and $5000 for their schools to create innovative, interactive learning projects on the Internet.

– LibraryNet aims to provide Canadians with affordable access to the Information Highway and to promote the use of the libraries for lifelong learning and for community and economic development. This is a co-operative venture on the part of Canada's public libraries, library jurisdictions and agencies, librarians and Industry Canada.

– The Computers for Schools program channels surplus computer equipment from businesses, governments and individuals to classrooms and public libraries across Canada. The initiative is run in partnership with volunteer groups of telephone employees, governments, businesses and communities.

VolNet is helping the voluntary sector to gain access and use Internet technologies to further their own missions. The program offers Internet connectivity, including computer equipment at a reduced cost, a free Internet account for one year and Internet skills development to 12 000 voluntary organizations until April 2002.

VolNet has a holistic approach to supporting the sector. In addition to setting up physical connections to the Internet, VolNet also helps voluntary organizations develop the necessary skills to acquire knowledge, access ongoing support, and learn about relevant on-line tools so that their connectivity is sustained. In order to engage the voluntary sector in the development and management of the program, the Government of Canada created an advisory committee to design a service-delivery model and help manage the program. VolNet services are delivered by third-party organizations that possess a unique mix of Internet and voluntary-sector experience.

### Council of Ministers of Education, Canada

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) is also co-ordinating Canada's participation in two international projects focussing on the use of technologies in education. As part of its Information and Communication Technologies and the Quality of Learning project, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is conducting a study of schools that are models of innovation in their integration and use of ICT. The International Association for Evaluation of Educational Achievement is also doing a study of exemplary classroom practices using technologies through its Second International Technology in Education Study, Module Two.

Canada will provide data to both of these international research projects by conducting detailed case studies in 15 exemplary schools across the country to identify why and how ICT contribute to the quality of learning and what investments are needed in equipment, software, support and professional development. Key partners in this project, in addition to CMEC, include the provinces and territories, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), and the TeleLearning Network of Centres of Excellence.

In 1999, Canada led the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum's international project on the Integration of Information and Communication Technologies through Teacher Professional Development and hosted a meeting of APEC member-economies to discuss and reflect on ICT and their impact on teaching and on teacher professional development. Though participating economies presented different models for integrating technologies in education, there was wide agreement among them about the need to train teachers not only on how to use new technologies but also in new pedagogical approaches appropriate to these technologies. CMEC, HRDC and Industry Canada held a parallel event, the Canadian Forum on ICT and Teacher Professional Development, to provide an opportunity for Canadians to examine these same issues. Participants included representatives from federal government departments, provincial/territorial ministries of education, school boards and principals, teacher federations, faculties of education and non-governmental organizations involved in ICT and teacher professional development.

In December 1996, Canada became a signatory to two world intellectual property organization treaties dealing with copyright in a digital environment. Canada is now looking to review its *Copyright Act*, in order to adhere to these treaties. CMEC is working with other education partners to propose amendments to the Act, so that students and teachers are able to use the Internet for educational purposes without infringing on the law.

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**Further scholarship and exchange programs for students, teachers, researchers and educational administrators using different strategies, including institution-to-institution ties, communications technology and internships which permit exposure to pedagogical and management innovations in the other countries of the Hemisphere. This will contribute to strengthening the institutional capacity of Ministries or Departments of Education, decentralised administrative entities and centres of higher learning.**

### Canadian International Development Agency and Human Resources Development Canada

The Government of Canada has allocated $65 million to international youth internships over two years as part of the $315 million Youth Employment Strategy announced in February 1997. The internships are being delivered by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), Industry Canada, Environment Canada and Heritage Canada. In 1998-1999 alone, an estimated 1860 internships were offered by CIDA.

To enhance employability prospects for Canadians in the field of information and communication technology (ICT), and to assist other nations in enhancing their ability to implement and use ICT, the Government of Canada supports the NetCorps Canada International and NetCorps Americas initiatives funded by Industry Canada and CIDA International Youth Programs. Both programs provide internships in international settings for technically qualified young Canadians to acquire, build and spread telecommunications infrastructure through Internet access, networking, information systems, software applications and computer training.

In addition, HRDC has funded, for the past five years, the International Academic Mobility Initiative, which fosters the acquisition of valuable international skills through increased academic mobility among post-secondary students and faculty members. Young Canadians can participate in one of two international student mobility ventures: the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education and the Canada-European Community Program for Co-operation in Higher Education and Training.

The Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education — a co-operative partnership among governments of Canada, Mexico and the United States — was established in 1995 with the collaboration of DFAIT. It was designed to support the development of trilateral joint projects among universities, colleges and technical institutions; strengthen co-operation in post-secondary education, training and internship; and increase student mobility. Through this initiative, more than 200 institutions across North America have contributed to the internationalization of curriculums and to an increase in the international skills and competencies of our post-secondary students.

The Canada-European Community (EC) Program for Co-operation in Higher Education and Training was also established in 1995 as a partnership between Canada and the European Community to encourage joint academic projects among higher-education institutions, training establishments and other organizations on both sides of the Atlantic. It flows from the Transatlantic Declaration on Canada-EC Relations which calls for co-operation and joint partnership in education, including academic and youth exchanges. Close to 1000 Canadian students have participated or are currently participating in projects involving 42 Canadian universities and colleges.

HRDC's support of this Program is an investment in a more internationally conscious workforce. There is currently domestic and international interest in expanding the size and scope of international mobility initiatives. HRDC is in the process of developing a strategy for the possible expansion of these initiatives in Asia Pacific, Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe and southern Africa.

In 1999, CIDA made a contribution of $3 million over five years to the Inter-American Organization of Higher Education for their College of the Americas project — a virtual network of colleges and universities of the Americas. The funds will help to create training networks in the fields of education, public health, environmental management and eco-tourism, and gender equality. These networks will allow participants from the Americas to follow virtual courses and take part in student exchanges to earn diplomas and degrees up to the master's level.

# PRESERVING AND STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY, JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

## DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Promotion of democracy, protection of human rights and respect for the rule of law have been central elements of the Summit process and of efforts to provide a durable foundation for hemispheric integration since Miami.

The record on democratic development in the hemisphere over the past decade clearly shows a solid trend line.

Cooperation in the articulation of agreed principles and common values and a commitment to collective action to give undertakings on democracy, human rights and justice practical expression is fundamental to the development of more stable and freer societies and to the achievement of the overall objective of creating a stronger community of nations.

At the 1998 Summit of the Americas in Santiago (Chile), leaders agreed to advance various initiatives with respect to democracy and human rights.

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**Define and develop, with the participation of civil society, comprehensive policies aimed at promoting and protecting human rights at a domestic level, in accordance with relevant international norms and principles, incorporating those policies, where appropriate, into national human rights plans and programs, as recommended by the World Conference of Vienna, 1993; and underscore as well the importance of promoting respect for the universally recognised principles of international humanitarian law.**

### Canadian Heritage

Canadian Heritage promotes respect for, as well as understanding and enjoyment of, human rights in Canada through educational, promotional and consultative activities involving the general public, educators, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), government departments and other parties. The program is also responsible for co-ordinating the domestic implementation of international human rights instruments with provincial and territorial governments. For example, in 2000, Canadian Heritage partnered with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to promote an International Year for a Culture of Peace. Canadian Heritage has also undertaken preparatory consultations, in co-operation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, in advance of the UN World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, to take place in Durban (South Africa) in August/September 2001.

The Government of Canada provides financial support to youth organizations involved in activities related to respect for human rights, peace and tolerance. It also supports initiatives in the primary schools of two Canadian provinces that promote the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

### Human Resources Development Canada

To encourage the strengthening of democratic institutions and respect for labour rights, the Labour Program of Human Resources Development Canada has offered, over the past years, technical assistance in the form of training workshops to countries of the Caribbean and Central and South America. The workshops focus on labour law and, more specifically, on preventive mediation, conflict resolution and organizational change.

### Health Canada

In 1993, the Government of Canada enacted Bill C-371, the *Child Day Act*. The Act designates November 20 of each year as National Child Day, a day aimed at raising awareness in Canada of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Since 1994, Health Canada has provided leadership for National Child Day through the development and dissemination of educational and promotional materials to encourage schools, community groups, families and others who work with children to mark this special day.

The strategy for this and future National Child Days is to highlight specific themes from the UNCRC through the creation of an interactive Web site and hard copy material complementing the messages on the Web site. The objectives for National Child Day 2000 were to engage young people in discussion about Canada's participation at the September 2001 UN General Assembly Special Session on Children, as well as to raise awareness of the UNCRC and National Child Day in general. The campaign highlighted the theme "participation" and encouraged Canadian children and youth to log onto the National Child Day Web site to voice their ideas on the concerns and emerging issues that may form the framework for the UN Special Session.

### Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Since 1988, the Government of Canada, through the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), has organized annual consultations with more than 100 human rights (including women's human rights) NGOs to discuss the development of Canada's position on issues raised at the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). DFAIT has also engaged in consultations and information exchange sessions on a broad variety of subjects, including peacebuilding, war-affected children, humanitarian issues, social development issues, disabilities issues and the 5- and 10-year reviews of world conferences on several of these issues.

Canada is actively involved in the preparatory process leading up to the September 2001 UN General Assembly Special Session on Children. This Special Session will review commitments made at the 1990 World Summit for Children, which Canada co-chaired, and agree on new commitments and a global agenda for the next decade. A priority for Canada is the active participation of civil society, and particularly children and youth, in the preparatory process and the Special Session itself. Other priorities for the Special Session include an emphasis on especially vulnerable groups, such as children affected by violence, including war-affected children, exploited child labourers, sexually exploited children and indigenous children. Canada has also taken an active role in hemispheric preparations, especially at the Fifth Ministerial Meeting on Children and Social Policy in the Americas in Kingston (Jamaica) in October 2000, which served as the preparatory meeting of the Americas for the Special Session. The Canadian delegation to the meeting participated in the drafting of the outcome document, organized a workshop promoting youth participation, and funded youth participation from developing countries.

Canada played a leadership role at the recent Beijing+5 Special Session in June 2000, chairing negotiations on sections of the outcome document and co-ordinating on behalf of JUSCANZ countries (Japan, the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Norway, Mexico and Iceland). At the Special Session, Canada made important contributions toward recognizing the diversity of women's experiences, strengthening gender equality activities in the UN system, eliminating violence against women, protecting civilians in armed conflict and preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS. Canada succeeded in obtaining stronger language on a broad range of issues such as health, globalization, poverty, equal sharing of paid and unpaid work between women and men, and the promotion and protection of the human rights of women and girls.

As part of its commitment to improving access to human rights information, DFAIT — in collaboration with the Canadian International Development Agency and the European Commission — funds the publication *For the Record: The United Nations Human Rights System*, a research and advocacy tool produced by a Canadian NGO. The document, available on CD-ROM and the Internet, summarizes the work of the UN human rights system and compiles it by country and theme, making the UN's work on this issue more easily accessible to policy makers, academics, advocates and the general public.

Following the recommendation of the 26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December 1995, Canada established in 1998 the Canadian National Committee for Humanitarian Law. The Committee helps to facilitate the implementation of international humanitarian law in Canada and provides a forum for discussion of related issues.

### Canadian International Development Agency

The aim of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) with respect to human rights and democracy is to strengthen:

- the role and capacity of civil society in developing countries in order to increase popular participation in decision making and democratic institutions and thus develop and sustain responsible governments;

- the competence of the public sector in order to promote the effective, honest and accountable exercise of power;

- the capacity of organizations that protect and promote human rights in order to enhance each society's ability to address rights concerns and strengthen the security of the individual; and

- the will of leaders to respect human rights, rule democratically and govern effectively.

Projects in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica and Peru and have focussed on capacity building in institutions responsible for promoting human rights and democracy, legal and judicial system reform, human rights training, the development of civilian oversight institutions, improved and more equitable access to legal and judicial processes, and the promotion of conflict management alternatives. In fiscal year 1998-1999, bilateral disbursements of some $32 million were allocated to human rights, democratic development and governance initiatives in the hemisphere.

CIDA has provided a contribution of $600 000 to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Colombia Office to support the valuable work it is doing in promoting and protecting human rights in Colombia.

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**Guarantee that all individuals have the right to due process of law, including the presumption of innocence and the right to trial within a reasonable period of time and the full respect for their constitutional and other legal rights. Governments will, in accordance with their legal framework, adopt measures intended to ensure that no person awaiting trial shall be detained for a period longer than permitted by law, taking fully into account the rights of the accused, the protection of society, crime prevention, the promotion of respect for the law, the rights of victims and other relevant considerations. Governments will continue their efforts to improve conditions of detention and enhance human rights education for the respective officials involved in the administration of justice.**

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees legal rights that are components or reflective of the right to due process of law. These rights include:

- the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice;
- the right not to be arbitrarily detained or imprisoned; and
- various rights upon being charged with an offence, including the presumption of innocence and the right to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal.

### Department of Justice Canada

Since 1994, the Department of Justice Canada, in conjunction with the Office of the Solicitor General, has been responsible for leading the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention. The strategy focusses on children and youth, indigenous peoples and women and is aimed at developing community-based responses to crime.

The Government of Canada has committed $32 million annually to help communities develop programs and partnerships that will help prevent crime. Four key programs include:

> – The Community Mobilization Program, which is managed jointly by federal and provincial/territorial governments in jurisdictions across Canada.
>
> – The Crime Prevention Partnership Program, which supports the involvement of organizations that contribute to community crime prevention activities through the development of information, tools and resources that facilitate community participation in all phases of crime prevention and that can be applied across Canada.
>
> – The Crime Prevention Investment Fund, which supports the development and evaluation of promising and innovative crime prevention programs and approaches in diverse communities.
>
> – The Business Action Program on Crime Prevention, which seeks the involvement of national and provincial/territorial businesses and professional associations in community crime prevention, information sharing and community mobilization.

Over the past few years, the Department of Justice has contributed to many improvements in the justice system and the way it addresses the needs of victims of crime, including recent amendments to the *Criminal Code* to ensure that victims have a voice in the criminal justice system.

In December 1999, Bill C-79, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (victims of crime)*, came into force to ensure that victims have a voice in the criminal justice system and that:

> – the responsible judicial officer (police officer, justice of the peace or judge) considers the safety and security of the victim in any decision about bail for an accused;
>
> – judges consider including as a condition of bail that an accused who is released pending trial abstain from any direct or indirect communication with the victim as well as any other condition necessary to ensure the safety and security of the victim; and
>
> – the particular concerns of the victim are considered and highlighted in decisions on the imposition of special bail conditions, including those for offences that involve firearms or criminal harassment.

In recognition of the fact that participating in criminal proceedings can be a traumatic experience for victims or witnesses and that the trauma may be greater for young or disabled witnesses or victims, or for victims of sexual and violent offences, Bill C-79 also:

> – extends protection to victims of sexual or violent crime who are 18 years of age or younger by restricting personal cross-examination by accused persons representing themselves through the appointment of counsel to conduct the cross-examination;
>
> – permits victims or witnesses with mental or physical disabilities to have a support person present during their testimony;

– clarifies that the publication ban provisions in the *Criminal Code*, which allow for a publication ban on the identity of sexual offence complainants, will protect the identity of victims of sexual offences and will also apply to the details of any other offences committed against them by the accused; and

– permits a judge to restrict publication of the identity of a wider range of victims or witnesses where the victim has established a need for such a restriction and where the judge considers it necessary for the proper administration of justice.

In addition to these legislative changes, the Government of Canada has designated funding to strengthen the role of victims and facilitate their participation in the criminal justice system. Specifically, $25 million over five years has been allocated for federal victim-related initiatives and programs. The Policy Centre for Victim Issues, an office within the Department of Justice, is mandated to develop and co-ordinate federal initiatives to strengthen the voice of victims in the criminal justice system. Of the $25-million commitment, $10 million is specifically dedicated to victim-related initiatives to support community efforts to enhance services, assistance and information available to victims and a wide range of initiatives designed to raise awareness about programs, services and legislation for victims of crime.

### Canadian International Development Agency

The Canadian International Development Agency has been active in the Americas in supporting the due process of law and human rights education. Among current initiatives, a $2.3-million project in Peru is aimed at strengthening the administrative and organizational capacity of the country's ombudsman. The project is helping to provide equal access to services for men and women, increase information dissemination, and ensure a broader geographical presence.

A $4-million Canada-El Salvador Development Fund supports initiatives of Salvadoran and Canadian community organizations contributing to the goals of El Salvador's post-conflict development priorities, including the consolidation of democratic processes and the protection of human rights.

In Colombia, a five-year, $1.5-million bilateral project has been assisting the work of four Colombian human rights NGOs in promoting awareness of and respect for basic human rights through education, research and legal assistance to disadvantaged or threatened groups.

A six-year, $2.4-million regional project is improving the knowledge and application of the principles of international humanitarian law by the armed forces in 12 Latin American countries, including Colombia. This project is led by Canada in co-operation with the International Committee of the Red Cross.

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**Promote a review of their respective national legislation in order to eliminate or amend those provisions which may lead to any type of discrimination, for any reason, in contravention of their international commitments. In particular, they will seek to attain legal equality between men and women by the year 2002. In this context, priority should be given to the rights to equal treatment in the workplace, property, inheritance and child custody, as well as combatting domestic violence.**

In Canada, legislation is in place to eliminate discrimination. Beginning with Section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the equality of all individuals is guaranteed without discrimination based on sex, race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, disability or other analogous grounds, such as sexual orientation. The Charter also protects laws, programs or activities that aim to improve the conditions of disadvantaged groups. In addition to the Charter, federal and provincial/territorial legislation prohibits discrimination.

The *Employment Equity Act* and the *Canada Labour Code* also contain provisions to support equality in the workplace. In 1998, the Canadian Human Rights Commission, in co-operation with Human Resources Development Canada and Status of Women Canada, prepared model harassment policies for the workplace. Two policies were developed, one for small businesses and one for medium-sized and large employers.

In October 2000, the ministers of justice and labour announced the appointment of a chair for the Pay Equity Task Force, who would oversee a comprehensive review of pay equity. The chair's first responsibility was to conduct consultations on the draft terms of reference for the Pay Equity Task Force with major stakeholder organizations. Phase I has been completed. During Phase II, the full Task Force will be put in place to conduct a comprehensive review of the legislation and submit a report to the ministers in 2002.

Since 1995, as part of its Federal Plan for Gender Equality, the Government of Canada has passed several key pieces of legislation that strengthen the criminal justice system's capacity to address violence against women and children, including:

- restrictions on the ownership and use of firearms;
- limits to the defence of extreme self-induced intoxication;
- strengthened criminal legislative provisions relating to violence against women and children;
- more effective peace bonds (protective court orders);
- provisions for longer sentences for crimes considered to be motivated by hate based on sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or violence against one's spouse or children;
- a strengthened sentencing and correctional regime for high-risk offenders, especially those previously convicted of sex offences and other violent offences;
- measures to allow Canadian prosecution of Canadians who travel abroad and sexually exploit children;
- a strengthened prohibition of the practice of female genital mutilation in Canada;
- restrictions on the eligibility for parole of certain inmates serving life sentences; and

- restrictions on the production of confidential records of witnesses for the defence and complainants in sexual assault proceedings.

Health Canada and the Department of Justice Canada, in partnership with several professionals and civil society representatives, are currently collaborating on a multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary strategy to provide a forum in which government, practitioners, researchers and organizations can attempt to address concerns related to the impact of separation and divorce on children. A framework for the strategy is being developed.

**Health Canada**

To ascertain the nature and extent of the problem of abuse of older adults in both the community and in long-term care settings, Health Canada is collaborating with Statistics Canada in the development and implementation of a "social survey victimization report." The report will provide data on the incidence of the abuse of older adults by family members or caregivers. Health Canada has also produced publications to assist health-care providers in identifying situations of abuse and in intervening appropriately.

Health Canada is collaborating with the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network to safeguard the human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS and is currently researching ongoing concerns such as testing and confidentiality, prostitution, prison health care, access to treatment and forms of discrimination against HIV/AIDS-infected people.

Health Canada and the province of Manitoba's Ministry of Family Services have undertaken a project with the Ministry of Health of St. Lucia to plan and implement a program to address violence against women and to set up the first shelter for abused women in St. Lucia.

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**Promote the adoption of legal, educational and social measures, as well as international cooperation, to combat the physical and sexual abuse of children, traffic in minors, child prostitution and child exploitation in all its forms, including pornography. At the same time, they will strengthen international cooperation through the implementation of a regional information system on affected children, based on national information systems, with the participation of and promotion by concerned international organisations, to analyse their condition and evaluate social policies to facilitate decision making in this sphere.**

**Health Canada**

Through the National Children's Agenda, federal, provincial and territorial governments have shown their commitment to working with communities toward ensuring that all Canadian children have the opportunity to achieve their potential and to grow up healthy, safe and secure in their families and communities.

In May 1999, the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministerial Council on Social Policy Renewal published a discussion paper, *A National Children's Agenda: Developing a Shared Vision*, which outlined a vision, values and goals for policy and programs supporting children. One of the goals stipulates that children, as well as being protected from abuse, neglect, discrimination, exploitation and danger, must have their basic needs met for food, shelter, clothing and transportation.

Through the Family Violence Initiative, the Government of Canada facilitates the efforts of individual Canadians and a wide variety of organizations to increase public awareness and develop more effective ways to prevent and respond to all forms of child abuse, including physical and sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and sexual exploitation. It focusses primarily on preventing and responding to violence against women and children in the home or in relationships of intimacy or dependency.

Health Canada leads and co-ordinates the initiative and operates the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence on behalf of 13 participating federal government departments, agencies and Crown corporations. Activities include research and evaluation; development of resources for increased public awareness and professional education; support for national networking; co-ordination and capacity building; and strengthening the criminal justice system's response to child abuse.

**Department of Justice Canada**

The Department of Justice contribution to the Family Violence Initiative seeks to strengthen the criminal justice system's response to all forms of family violence including child abuse. In recent years, the Department has undertaken a review of child victims and the criminal justice system. A consultation paper was released in November 1999, which examines three areas for possible reform:

- creating further child-specific offences, such as child homicide and criminal neglect;
- sentencing changes to improve protection for children from those who might re-offend; and
- facilitating children's testimony and providing for assistance to child witnesses.

The document also explores issues relating to age, including raising the age of consent.

The Department's review also includes working with the provinces and territories — the jurisdictions responsible for child protection — to facilitate the development of intersectoral and interdisciplinary approaches by social services, justice agencies and the health and education sectors. The aim is to emphasize the need to focus on prevention and on strengthening the links between justice agencies and the early warning, investigation, prevention and enforcement stages of child protection.

Announced in May 1998, the Youth Justice Renewal Strategy is based upon three key directions: prevention, meaningful consequences for youth crime and intensified rehabilitation. Integral to the prevention component of the Strategy is the Government of Canada's commitment to work with the provinces and territories to respond more effectively to the issue of youth under 12 committing offences. This commitment was reinforced following the Department of Justice's

September 1999 conference entitled Working Together with Children — Protection and Prevention: A Conference on Child Victimization and Child Offending.

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

Canada played a leadership role in the negotiation of the optional protocol to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime that deals with trafficking in persons and signed the protocol in December 2000. The Protocol to Prevent and Punish Trafficking in Persons addresses trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and recognizes its criminal nature.

Canada also actively participated in negotiating the optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and pornography. Canada is currently discussing the matter with the provinces and territories and is working toward signature and ratification of this optional protocol.

**Status of Women Canada**

Status of Women Canada (SWC)'s support to several gender-related priorities includes a commitment to eliminate systemic violence against children. Through its involvement in Canada's Family Violence Initiative, SWC is providing financial assistance to the Alliance of Five Research Centres on Violence to develop recommendations for a national strategy on violence prevention and protection of the girl child.

SWC also partnered with the Canadian International Development Agency and Kids Friendly in Vancouver, British Columbia, to pilot an intersectoral project entitled Stolen Innocence: A National Education Campaign Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (November 1998 to August 1999). A national steering committee of representatives from each of the targeted sectors is developing a strategy to increase public awareness, educate the Canadian travel and tourism industry, and improve sharing of information and resources.

The International Summit of Sexually Exploited Youth took place in Victoria, British Columbia, in March 1998 to provide a forum for victims of sexual abuse. As a result of the Summit, a declaration and action plan were developed. The Summit also prompted an initiative called Out from the Shadows and Into the Light, with funding from the Crime Prevention Partnership Program of the Department of Justice Canada and from SWC. This initiative aims to address the commercial sexual exploitation of girls and boys by increasing public awareness of the problems facing these young people, by helping them to leave the sex trade and by deterring other youth from entering the sex trade. The Out from the Shadows and Into the Light initiative has led to the development of community responses for preventing the sexual exploitation of children.

By providing funding to the Alliance of Five Research Centres on Violence since 1997-1998, SWC is also supporting an initiative by RESOLVE to examine innovative programming for children and youth involved in prostitution. RESOLVE has, as part of Phase 2 of its work, undertaken a legal examination of the detention of girls as victims of prostitution and considered the different legal capacities of provincial child welfare legislation, criminal law and other legislation to deal with this issue.

The Government of Canada is now exploring ways to establish support mechanisms such as rehabilitation, counselling, education and training, so that youth, particularly girls, can reintegrate into their communities and the labour force. A portion of the work of the Alliance of Five Research Centres on Violence includes related community-based research leading to recommendations in this area.

### Canadian International Development Agency

Through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives and locally managed counterpart funds, the Canadian International Development Agency supports local initiatives that attack the roots of sexual exploitation by providing protection, education and assistance to victims of the sex trade. CIDA's Gender Equality Funds in South America, Central America and the Caribbean are supporting local initiatives related to intra-family violence. As an example, the Paraguay Fund, with a four-year $900 000 budget, supports projects in Paraguay that seek to improve the effectiveness of government and NGOs in preventing violence against women and in treating victims. The Fund has supported radio campaigns to educate the public and seminars on updating laws to penalize perpetrators and protect victims. It has also helped to develop and improve legal services and community attention to women victims of violence.

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**Promote the signature, ratification and accession to international human rights instruments to which they are not party, as well as observe the provisions contained in the instruments to which they are party.**

Canada is party to a number of international instruments for the protection of human rights, including the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Canada is one of the principal promoters of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and has actively lobbied other international governments to ratify this Convention. Canada played an active role in negotiating the two optional protocols to this Convention, which dealt with children in armed conflict and the sale of children, and with child pornography and prostitution. Canada also subscribes to the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man as a result of adhering to the Charter of the Organization of American States and is examining, with the provinces and the territories, the options for acceding to the Declaration.

While Canada has not yet been able to accede to the American Convention of Human Rights (because many of its provisions are either unknown or problematic in Canadian federal and provincial/territorial law) it is continuing to explore how it could accede to this Convention.

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**Strengthen the inter-American human rights system through concrete initiatives and measures which aim to reinforce its institutional structure and promote its links with national systems and regional entities that promote and protect human rights. In this context, Governments consider important the institutional strengthening of the Inter-American Human Rights Institute.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

In a July 1999 statement to the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS), Canada raised the need for wide-ranging discussions on strengthening the inter-American human rights system. As result, this issue has been placed on the OAS agenda.

Canada was an active participant in launching discussions to strengthen the inter-American human rights system in the OAS Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs. In parallel, it has been working within the OAS and the Inter-American Human Rights Institute in support of linking national institutions such as the ombudsman offices and national human rights commissions to facilitate technical co-operation between these bodies and thus strengthen their links to the organs of the inter-American system. With Canadian support, hemispheric partners established the Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Americas in November 2000. Canada also contributed $80 000 to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' program on National Human Rights Institutions, which provides technical assistance to countries wishing to establish national human rights institutions.

Canada also played a key role in the development and adoption of the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality, approved at the First Meeting of Ministers or Highest Ranking Authorities Responsible for the Advancement of Women in Member States in April 2000. The Program underlines the importance of integrating a gender perspective into the work of all organs, agencies and entities of the OAS system, including the Inter-American Human Rights System.

Canada fully supports the role of the OAS Special Rapporteur on the Status of Women in the Americas and, in response to a request from the office, provided the Special Rapporteur with detailed information on Canada's approach to the promotion and protection of women's human rights and gender equality, as well as on steps that Canada has taken to advance the status of women, including specific legislative, policy, programming and other initiatives.

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**Support States that so request in the processes of promoting and consolidating democratic values, practices and institutions by strengthening the respective organs of the Organisation, including the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy.**

**Health Canada**

Canada has been a strong supporter of the work of the Inter-American Children's Institute (IACI) and is currently serving the second of a two-year term as president of the Directing Council.

The IACI promotes and assists in the adoption of legal, educational and social measures to address domestic violence, sexual exploitation of children, child labour, international adoptions, juvenile justice and child welfare systems, disabilities, drug abuse prevention, democracy within the family and, more broadly, children's rights. The IACI's senior management has been active in arguing that the goals of the OAS — democracy, respect for human rights, the eradication of poverty and discrimination, and expanded economic integration — are dependent on the health, well-being and protection of children and youth and on their participation in decision making concerning their welfare.

### Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Canada supports the Organization of American States' Inter-American Commission of Women and believes that a strong and effective Commission is essential for the promotion of gender equality objectives in the Hemisphere.

In collaboration with the governments of Mexico and Peru, Canada led a successful resolution on the Status of Women in the Americas and Strengthening and Modernization of the Inter-American Commission of Women at the 29th General Assembly of the OAS, with the goal of improving the Commission's links with other Hemispheric entities and making it more strategic in its work.

Canada also supports democratic development through the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IIDEA). Canada joined IIDEA in 1997, and its membership allows for significant contributions to Canadian foreign policy and development assistance in the areas of governance, democracy and peacebuilding. Canada has benefited particularly from the high quality of IIDEA's policy and guidelines work, including its development of electoral guidelines, the Administration and Cost of Elections database and the *Democracy and Deep-Rooted Conflict handbook.*

### Canadian International Development Agency

Canada has been a leader in the development of the Inter-American Parliamentary Forum (IAPF) under the auspices of the OAS Unit for the Promotion of Democracy. The Canadian International Development Agency contributed $400 000 for the creation of this network. In March 2000, the chairpersons of foreign relations committees or their equivalents met in Washington, D.C. (United States) to advance the development of this network. The promotion of dialogue between hemispheric parliamentarians, who are those on the front line of the democratic process, will help to consolidate democratic values, practices and institutions throughout the Hemisphere. The first meeting of the IAPF will take place in Ottawa (Canada) in March 2001.

Canada has provided support to the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy in its electoral observation efforts in Haiti, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela.

### Human Resources Development Canada

Human Resources Development Canada's Labour Program supports and participates actively in the work of the OAS Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour. This participation includes involvement in the activities of two working groups: one on "modernization of the state and labour administration" and the other on "globalization of the economy and its social and labour dimensions."

The working groups were created after the 1998 OAS Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour to carry out studies and to provide information, materials and advice on technical co-operation in the areas of employment and labour legislation, labour relations, functions of ministries of labour, work site inspection and labour standards.

Canada will host the next Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour in October 2001 in Ottawa, and Canada's Minister of Labour will become the chair of the Conference until 2003.

**Strengthen the exercise of and respect for all human rights and the consolidation of democracy, including the fundamental right to freedom of expression and thought, through support for the activities of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in this field, in particular the recently created Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression.**

Canada is a strong advocate of the right to freedom of opinion and expression. At the UN Commission on Human Rights, Canada leads a consensus resolution on the freedom of opinion and expression, which has established the Special Rapporteur on the subject. Canada supports co-operation between this mechanism and the OAS Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Special Rapporteur on Freedom of the Media.

Canada fully supports the role of the OAS Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and, in response to a request from that office, provided the Special Rapporteur with detailed information on Canadian access to information legislation.

Canada works closely with the OAS Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and it has contributed to the Commission's internal review process by making a number of concrete suggestions regarding ways to expedite the petition process and speed up the resolution of cases.

The Commission was invited to conduct a site visit to Canada to examine the country's refugee determination system in the fall of 1997. The Government of Canada received the Commission's final *Report on the Situation of Human Rights of Asylum Seekers within the Canadian Refugee Determination System* in February 2000.

**Promote programs of cooperation, through the use of advanced information technology and with the support of the international institutions that deal with administration of justice, in areas identified by the OAS Working Group on Democracy and Human Rights, which include: a) training of police and correctional officers; b) necessary steps to remedy inhumane conditions in prisons and reduce drastically the number of pre-trial detainees; and c) enhancing human rights education for judges, magistrates and other court officials.**

Canada has been an active participant in the inter-American meetings of ministers of justice and attorneys general. The most recent meeting in San José (Costa Rica) addressed key issues of cyber crime, extradition and mutual legal assistance, prison and penitentiary health policy, alternative dispute resolution and the Justice Studies Centre for the Americas.

### Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canadian International Development Agency, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Canada worked jointly with Brazil, responsible co-ordinator for the human rights and democracy theme, in organizing a hemispheric seminar on police training held in Sao Paulo (Brazil) in November 1999. Organized with the support of the Canadian International Development Agency, the seminar brought together police officials from throughout the Hemisphere, including two officers from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, as well as experts from the International Committee of the Red Cross and the UN Drug Control Program. Discussions at the seminar centred on four broad themes:

- training of the public security professional in view of the social needs of the third millennium;
- human rights and the training of police officers;
- effective strategies and techniques of police training; and
- technological tools and the learning environment for police training.

The seminar served to establish a network for exchanges among police officers and provided a useful blueprint for future seminars related to this Santiago action item, particularly with regard to training for court officers and prison officials.

## EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

To further entrench democratic principles at the local and hemispheric levels, governments agreed to promote democratic culture in their educational programs.

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**Include in educational programs, within the legal framework of each country, objectives and contents that develop democratic culture at all levels, in order to teach individuals ethical values, a spirit of cooperation and integrity. To that end, the participation of teachers, families, students and outreach workers will be stepped up in their work related to conceptualising and implementing the plans for shaping citizens imbued with democratic values.**

Since 1998, the Government of Canada has made efforts to strengthen democracy by instilling democratic values among Canadian youth and promoting democratic practices in the Americas. Some of these initiatives are described in the section that follows.

### Canadian Heritage

The Citizens' Participation and Multiculturalism Branch and the Official Language Program Branch of Canadian Heritage are responsible for ensuring the full participation of linguistic, ethno-cultural and racial minorities in the social, political, economic and cultural life of Canada. Funding and technical support are available for community projects that increase young Canadians' understanding of democratic principles and foster shared values and respect for individual rights.

On December 10, 1998, Canada joined in celebrating the 50th anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the document that first outlined the human rights of peoples of the world. To mark this important anniversary, Canadian Heritage developed the CREDO Web site designed to give Canadian youth an opportunity to create what they consider to be their top 10 human rights. As part of the CREDO initiative, young Canadians have also participated in various community and school events across the country to discuss the value and significance of human rights (www.pch.gc.ca/credo).

### Elections Canada

To further promote the importance of human rights and the democratic electoral process among Canadian children, Elections Canada organized a "national election for youth rights" in November 1999. As a result of this election, a number of school children were able to vote on what they believed to be their most important human right.

### Canadian International Development Agency

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has helped to implement the sharing of democratic values throughout the Hemisphere. In Guyana, for example, CIDA has supported conflict resolution, community-based solutions and reconciliation projects in preparation for the 2001 elections in Guyana. Some $300 000 has been provided to train several Guyanese, including civil servants, about the need to incorporate democratic culture in their society. Various civil society organizations were also part of this training process.

Canada has been a leader in the development of the Inter-American Parliamentary Forum by helping to defray initial organizational expenses. The Forum helps to fill a current void by creating a formal hemispheric interparliamentary organization that will enhance democratic and civil society consultations by focussing the dialogue of national legislators on matters pertinent to the inter-American agenda for co-operation. In March 2000, heads of foreign relations committees from parliaments of the Americas met for the first time in Washington, D.C. (United States) to advance the development of this network of legislators.

## CIVIL SOCIETY

At the 1998 Summit of the Americas held in Santiago (Chile), participating governments agreed that it was important to include civil society in decisions on public issues. Canadians strongly believe they should have the opportunity to influence important government decisions. In response, the Government of Canada has established a tradition of public consultations in policy development and continues to develop new ways to support increased citizen participation in policy and decision making.

**Draw upon existing initiatives that promote increased participation of civil society in public issues, such as relevant successful experiences from the National Councils for Sustainable Development and the Inter-American Strategy for Public Participation, among others. As soon as possible, Governments will adopt work plans to implement legal and institutional frameworks based on the principles and recommendations in their respective countries.**

Increased openness and consultation with citizens have been stated priorities over the past two decades. Some examples of the Government of Canada's commitment to civil society include:

– extensive cross-Canada consultations that led to the 1995 Canadian foreign policy statement;

– the inclusion of civil society views on the environment and sustainable development;

– the Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA) in which federal, provincial and territorial governments agreed to ensure effective mechanisms for Canadians to participate in developing social priorities and reviewing outcomes;

– the public dialogue on the National Children's Agenda, sponsored by the federal, provincial and territorial governments in 1999, which helped to establish a shared vision for children in Canada;

– the commitments made in the 1997 and 1999 Speeches from the Throne to ensure that citizens' views are reflected in government decision making; and

– the forthcoming policy statement and guidelines on consulting and engaging Canadians.

The 1999 Speech from the Throne stated that "Canadians expect their national government to focus on areas where it can and must make a difference. And they want this done in a Canadian way — working together, balancing individual and government action and listening to citizens." In response, the forthcoming national policy statement and guidelines on consulting and engaging Canadians will affirm the government's commitment to public consultation, define general guiding principles and practices for the effective engagement of citizens in government decision making, and outline roles and responsibilities in support of a consultative culture in government. The policy and guidelines are currently being developed by the Privy Council Office and the Treasury Board Secretariat in collaboration with all federal departments and agencies and are expected to take effect in 2001.

Each year the Government of Canada organizes public consultations across the country to obtain views and information needed for policy making; evaluate policies, programs and services; and explore future broad directions. Some of these processes are led by Parliament, such as hearings by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade or hearings arising out of legislative requirements such as those embedded in the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*. Others are sponsored by federal departments, such as consultations in response to the requirement for each government department to table sustainable development strategies every three years or the Canadian International Development Agency's annual International Development Day conferences.

### National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy

In 1998, the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy organized the National Forum on Climate Change, a unique citizen engagement exercise to help Canadians better understand climate change issues and their implications. The Forum's panellists, accomplished Canadians recognized for outstanding service in such areas as community volunteerism, education, health care and business, provided a full range of expert opinion and knowledge and examined all sides of the climate change debate over a period of six months. The Forum then presented a public declaration, based on its findings, to the Prime Minister, all levels of government and Canadian citizens. It conducted briefings to promote and explain the declaration and the Forum process to senior government officials, key stakeholder representatives and the public.

### Environment Canada

Environment Canada (EC) shares its responsibility to protect the environment and promote sustainable development with all sectors of society and with individual Canadians. The Department has a rich tradition of consultation with civil society and also provides opportunities for public involvement through its community-based programming. For example, the Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Network, a network of monitoring and research sites, involves groups and individuals in monitoring changes in Canadian ecosystems at both the local and national levels. Partnerships with volunteers and civil society are an important component of EC's ecosystem initiatives, a multi-sectoral approach to resource management that provides an ecological context for integrated decision making.

The Biosphere Ecowatch Network is composed of individuals, schools, colleges, universities, organizations and research centres that gather and share information on water and the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes ecosystems. The Network's goals are to develop a collective will to protect these ecosystems; elicit community action; encourage information sharing for finding sustainable solutions; and encourage interaction between the public and the scientific community. More than 50 groups have been involved in 30 Ecowatch projects — schools and citizens groups have rehabilitated sections of the St. Lawrence River; an awareness and intervention program has been launched on zebra mussels; and Monarch butterflies have been observed, marked and bred.

EC's EcoAction Community Funding Program provides financial support to community groups for projects that have measurable, positive impacts on the environment. EcoAction encourages projects that protect, rehabilitate or enhance the natural environment and build the capacity of communities to sustain these activities into the future. Projects require matching funds or in-kind support from other sponsors. Priority for funding is given to projects that will achieve results in the areas of climate change, clean air and clean water. A wide variety of projects have been funded, ranging from stream cleanups to habitat restoration, home energy audits, community gardens and automobile emissions clinics.

EC also manages, on behalf of the Government of Canada, the public education and outreach component of the Climate Change Action Fund (CCAF). As of January 2001, the government contribution of over $17 million had leveraged an additional $34 million from the private sector and other partners to fund 152 projects to raise public understanding and provide business, industry, youth, educators, communities and others with tools and information needed to take action on climate change.

EC's Meteorological Service of Canada, in managing the science sub-component of the Science Impacts and Adaptations component on behalf of the Government of Canada, has funded some 79 projects over the three years of the CCAF. The projects have supported university, government and private sector researchers in carrying out key scientific work related to several issues including climate model improvements, systematic climate observations, greenhouse gas sources and sinks, arctic climate issues, climate and weather extremes, and climate scenarios.

Canadian scientists have also been supported in their participation in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Total CCAF funding for all projects over the three years is $7.5 million, with additional contributions from partners at a ratio of nearly two to one.

Climate change is one of the key issues facing Canada and the world. Civil society organizations have been integrally involved in the development of a national response to Canada's commitments under the Kyoto Protocol. In April 1998, 16 "issue tables" consisting of 450 experts from government, NGOs, industry and academia were convened to provide expert advice and detailed input into the identification, analysis and assessment of options to meet our commitments. The issue tables have produced extensive reports that identify a full range of options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Canada.

EC, as a party to the North American Agreement on Environmental Co-operation and to the Canada-Chile Agreement on Environmental Co-operation, supports the joint public advisory committees established under each agreement. The role of these two independent bodies, composed of civil society members, is to advise the councils of environment ministers and to promote public participation.

### Human Resources Development Canada

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) regularly works with civil society organizations on social and labour market policy issues. One recent example was a series of roundtable discussions held across Canada involving leaders from the private, voluntary and public sectors, labour and academia to discuss key social trends, social policy priorities, and new approaches to social policy. The Public Policy Forum, on behalf of HRDC, sponsored the events and provided a neutral, independent forum for open dialogue on public policy.

During preparations for the World Summit for Social Development and Beyond, HRDC, along with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency, sponsored a civil society consultation process. The process included regional meetings, electronic consultations and a national meeting between civil society representatives and federal officials. The objective was to solicit civil society input for the development of Canadian positions to be taken during UN negotiations. Feedback also focussed on domestic performance with respect to Summit commitments.

Currently, HRDC, along with Health Canada and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, is co-funding a consultation process with NGOs that is being led by the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children. This is in preparation for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children, which will take place in September 2001. The Coalition is involved in gaining the perspectives of NGOs on children's rights for the Special Session and subsequent meetings. This is being done through regional and national consultations, as well as through an on-line survey.

During the development of the *In Unison 2000: Persons with Disabilities in Canada* report (to be released shortly), members of several national, provincial and territorial disability organizations worked with federal, provincial and territorial governments. In addition, a smaller group of disability community members and representatives of the five national Aboriginal organizations provided comments and input to drafts of the report. Federal, provincial and territorial governments are continuing to work in partnership with members of the disability community, Aboriginal communities and other stakeholders toward the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in Canada.

The Task Force on Disability Issues involved members of Parliament and observers from the disability community consulting Canadians from coast to coast in order to identify workable federal priorities. The recommendations were contained in the report *Equal Citizenship for Canadians with Disabilities: The Will to Act.*

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**Promote, with the participation of civil society, the development of principles and recommendations for institutional frameworks to stimulate the formation of responsible and transparent, non-profit and other civil society organisations, including, where appropriate, programs for volunteers, and encourage, in accordance with national priorities, public sector-civil society dialogue and partnerships in the areas that are considered pertinent in this Plan of Action. In this context the Organisation of American States may serve as a forum for the exchange of experiences and information.**

**Privy Council Office**

On June 9, 2000, the President of the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada and Minister responsible for Infrastructure announced measures to confirm and reinforce the Government of Canada's commitment to building a new relationship with Canada's voluntary sector, a sector composed of a number of organizations ranging from small, neighbourhood issue-specific groups to broad national umbrella agencies. The Government of Canada will commit more than $90 million over the next five years to developing its relationship with the voluntary sector to enhance the quality of life of Canadians. This will entail working with sector partners so that the government can better serve Canadians, as well as supporting sector partners in their own work to assist Canadians.

**Canadian International Development Agency**

As a vital pillar of Canadian society, the work of the voluntary sector reaches beyond national borders, enhancing Canada's international reputation for valuing citizen engagement. Voluntary groups operate with partners in developing countries, implementing projects, assisting during crises and contributing to Canada's foreign and overseas development co-operation policies. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) delivers, for instance, a significant portion of its programming through non-profit groups such as NGOs, universities, unions and professional associations. CIDA is an important contributor to the Voluntary Sector Initiative.

CIDA consults regularly with civil society organizations to help define its development policies and to inform Canadians of its activities. Once a year, CIDA organizes an International Development Day, an event that encompasses up to 2000 organizations involved in international development co-operation and ranging from community-based NGOs to private sector enterprises.

The Canadian Partnership Branch at CIDA supports the activities of Canadian civil society organizations working with their partners in developing countries. In Latin America and the Caribbean, these organizations work in a variety of sectors ranging from environmental protection to small and medium-sized enterprise development. In 1999-2000, the Branch provided approximately $75.2 million to organizations working with the Americas.

Examples of other initiatives supporting civil society organizations in the region include:

– a $500 000 project to support the participation of civil society organizations in inter-American dialogue on key development issues including a CIDA-supported civil society symposium on economic integration and democratic development held on the margins of the 2000 OAS General Assembly in Windsor (Canada);

– a $4.8-million project to strengthen Guyanese civil society organizations working in community development;

– a $1.7-million project in Brazil involving United Way Canada and a group of nine Brazilian NGOs to provide Canadian expertise in fund raising, board development, volunteer training and management;

– a $4-million Canada-El Salvador development fund supporting Salvadoran and Canadian community organizations that contribute to the goals of El Salvador's post-conflict development priorities: poverty reduction, consolidation of democratic processes and the protection of human rights;

– a $3-million "green" fund in Jamaica that supports environmental and natural resource management initiatives by community groups and NGOs by helping them to strengthen their environmental and natural resource management, public environmental education and networking capabilities;

– a $3-million "enhancing civil society" project that works with selected Jamaican partners — including NGOs and government agencies — to develop the capacity of community groups to mobilize support, plan initiatives, access information and funds, and implement projects; and

– in all countries of the Americas where CIDA is active there are locally managed funds supporting initiatives by local, usually small, NGOs and institutions active in sectors such as gender equality, micro-enterprises and agricultural co-operatives involved in democratic development. These funds include the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, Gender Equality Funds, Counterpart Funds and Debt Conversion Funds.

### Status of Women Canada

Status of Women Canada (SWC) supports independent policy research on gender-related issues. SWC also plays a role in annually funding women's organizations that address the underlying causes of violence against women and supports equality-seeking organizations. Beneficiary partners include various groups from the non-governmental, voluntary and private sectors.

One of the key contributions of SWC's Women's Program funding and technical assistance was to enable women's and other equality-seeking groups to take part actively and effectively in key preparatory activities leading to the UN General Assembly Special Session entitled Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century, held in June 2000 in New York (United States). Canadian NGOs contributed to the policy-making process by playing an active role in producing analysis documents, providing training to those not familiar with the UN processes, lobbying governments and monitoring negotiations on the outcomes document. They also focussed on developing links with NGOs from like-minded countries at the UN Economic Commission for Europe preparatory meeting in January 2000 in Geneva (Switzerland) and the Beijing+5 Preparatory Committee in March 2000 in New York. SWC funded on-line discussions for women's NGOs in preparation for the latter event.

Funding to women's organizations and other equality-seeking groups has helped to increase public understanding of gender-based analysis through presentations and dialogue among women's organizations, policy makers and other stakeholders. Gender-sensitive policies and programs, including tools, were promoted and implemented within institutions such as health and social services organizations, universities and other workplaces in many communities across the country.

Government of Canada funding to NGOs addressing gender equality has enabled the Canadian women's movement to highlight the issues of poverty and violence against women and to mobilize women and men around the World March of Women 2000. This global initiative brought women and men from around the world together to examine how they are affected by poverty and violence, identify critical actions that need to be taken by governments, and strengthen links among women at the global level. More than 150 countries were involved in mobilizing individuals around the issues of poverty and violence and in taking part in the postcard campaign.

A broad-based consultation on gender equality was held in December 1999, which brought together some 100 participants from women's and other civil society groups from across Canada for a dialogue with elected and government officials. Discussions focussed on health and the environment, violence against women, human rights and economic issues.

In March 2000, an Aboriginal Women's Roundtable on Gender Equality, organized by SWC, brought together Aboriginal women from across Canada to discuss gender equality for Aboriginal women and consultation principles and models. This was the first time such a dialogue had taken place with the Government of Canada, and it was viewed as a significant step toward involving the diversity of Aboriginal women in the federal policy-making process.

### Canadian Heritage

Canadian Heritage plays a primary role in reaching out to Canadians to nurture excellence and to build capacity in people and institutions through support to NGOs, volunteer networks, academics and other sectors of civil society. Through programs aimed at recognizing and nurturing the diversity of Canadian society, and by encouraging active participation in volunteerism and human rights, this Department establishes critical partnerships across civil society.

Canadian Heritage supports NGOs through partnerships with language minority communities and their organizations. Since November 1999, Canadian Heritage has undertaken a process of renewal of the Canada-Community Agreements, which provide financial resources to official language minority communities in each province and territory that allow them to set their own development priorities.

The Department works with urban Aboriginal communities by providing support for friendship centres, including the announcement of funding in January 2000 for the Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centres, which enables community-based organizations to provide input into the effective delivery of services. Ethno-cultural groups also receive support to build effective participation of minority communities in the economic, political and social life of Canada. Throughout 2000, these organizations were engaged in a regional, national and international process to ensure that their perspective was considered in Canada's preparations for hosting the Third Summit of the Americas.

Support also goes to the artistic community for capacity building and to help sustain and promote the country's cultural diversity. For example, since 1999 Canadian Heritage has provided support to the Canadian Conference of the Arts and the Coalition for Cultural Diversity to ensure that the voices of Canadian civil society are heard in the national and international sphere.

Canadian Heritage also nurtures excellence in sport by partnering with other levels of government and with sport organizations, athletes, coaches and administrators — all key constituents of civil society. For example, in 2000 the Department provided financial support to the World Sport for All Congress and funded a national conference, aimed at youth, on anti-doping in sport. It also launched national consultations on strengthening the sport system in this country, a process that will culminate in the hosting of a national summit on sport early in 2001.

### Citizenship and Immigration

The Metropolis Project is a partnership designed and co-ordinated by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. It involves nine federal departments, 15 Canadian universities, 20 countries and four international agencies. It is a co-operative, international research initiative created to stimulate multi-disciplinary work and discussion on immigrant integration and the effects of international migration on urban centres.

Ultimately, the Project's aim is to build a network to promote serious working exchanges among policy makers, researchers and civil society organizations — to enable societies to better manage international migration and develop the cohesion necessary for societal success. In November 2000, the Fifth International Metropolis Conference, held in Vancouver (Canada), brought 740 policy makers, civil society representatives, and researchers together from across the globe to discuss research and policy questions around immigration, integration and diversity. The discussions on the wide range of issues covered are being posted on the Metropolis Web site (www.international.metropolis.net) as they become available.

### Health Canada

Health Canada supports various initiatives that promote greater awareness of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. For example, the Government of Canada supported the development of a monitoring framework by the Canadian Coalition on the Rights of the Child, an umbrella organization composed of 34 NGOs. Subsequently, the Government of Canada provided funding to implement the framework and monitor several selected articles of the Convention.

In 1999, Health Canada supported Media Awareness Network (MNet)'s participation in the 18th Pan-American Child Congress held in Buenos Aires (Argentina). MNet provides educational tools for critical thinking about media information, media entertainment and new communications technologies. It conducted analysis on, and stimulated public debate about, the power of the media in the lives of children and young people. MNet developed two workshops: 1) Health Issues and Media Influences and 2) Critical Thinking Skills for the Internet.

### Human Resources Development Canada

Most efforts by federal, provincial and territorial governments to reform social policies and programs involve capacity-building initiatives, including public engagement. Engaging people, communities, voluntary organizations, institutions and the private sector in the process of social development involves drawing upon existing capabilities and helping to develop new ones. A related contribution to social development capacity is the support provided by governments to civil society organizations. Many of these organizations undertake valuable research and also represent the views of their constituents in public debates on social policy.

For example, the Social Development Partnerships program is a research and development program. It supports national voluntary organizations and initiatives that promote social development and the equal participation of people with disabilities as well as social development for populations at risk in Canadian society. Supported activities include the identification, development and promotion of best practices and models of service delivery, on a national basis. These activities also build community capacity to meet the social development needs and aspirations of people at risk.

The Aboriginal Relations Office has signed 79 agreements with Aboriginal communities to enable these communities to design and deliver labour market programming. The Office works in partnership with Aboriginal leadership and communities to help ensure access to labour market opportunities. Also, it helped to facilitate the establishment of the National Aboriginal Youth Council and Strategy, which partners orders of government with Aboriginal organizations on youth issues, and the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Sector Council, which links government, industry and Aboriginal groups in a co-operative forum that analyzes and addresses sector-wide human resources issues.

With respect to youth, partnerships with the private sector, non-profit organizations, unions and public sector agencies help HRDC deliver the effective, long-term strategies needed to prepare youth for work and help them find jobs. For example, the Canadian Youth Foundation, the Canadian Foundation for Economic Education, the Canadian Career Development Foundation and HRDC are collaborating on Career Circuit, an initiative to create a coast-to-coast network of youth service agencies that provide career guidance. Skills Canada, a non-profit organization, partners with HRDC in an effort to promote trades and technology as rewarding career options for young Canadians since 1997.

On rural programming, a non-governmental advisory group provides advice and guidance as part of the selection process for pilot projects that build on existing rural networks and supports greater grassroots participation in community-based development.

### Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

In partnership with the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development (CCFPD), the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) encourages public participation in the development of Canada's foreign policy through various initiatives including roundtables, workshops and seminars.

Beginning in March 1999, the CCFPD, along with NGOs, has organized a series of roundtables to engage Canadians in a policy discussion on the Americas. The roundtables brought together NGOs, academics, government officials and others to share their experiences and ideas for policy options. So far, the CCFPD has organized or funded nine such meetings: Developing a Canadian Discussion on the Americas, Calgary (March 1999); Democratization in the Americas, Halifax (July 1999); Initiatives for Democratic Education in the Americas: Education and the Free Trade Area of the Americas, Vancouver (July 1999); Priorities, Plans and Activities, Ottawa (August 1999); Governance, Civil Society and the Americas, Victoria (January 2000); Threats to Democracy in the Americas, Vancouver (March 2000); Canada, Indigenous Peoples and the

Hemisphere, Winnipeg (March 2000); Look Ahead to Windsor, Ottawa (April 2000); Small Arms and the OAS Roundtable, Ottawa (April 2000).

Since 1998, DFAIT has held ongoing information exchange sessions with civil society representatives with interests in the Hemisphere. The purpose of these sessions has been to inform these representatives about Canada's activities in the inter-American system including pertinent issues leading up to the meetings of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG).

The SIRG, which is composed of foreign ministry representatives from each of the 34 democratic OAS signatory countries, meets on a periodic basis and has held about three meetings each year since its inception in 1995. The SIRG was created to monitor the progress and implementation of the Summit of the Americas mandates and to plan subsequent summits.

In addition to the SIRG meetings, there is a parallel multilateral summit follow-up mechanism within the political structure of the OAS: the Special Committee on Inter-American Summits Management (commonly referred to by its Spanish acronym CEGCI). This Committee of the OAS Permanent Council hears reports from the various units and offices of the OAS charged with implementing specific summit agenda items. The committee has a reporting responsibility to the OAS General Assembly, through the Permanent Council.

Canada has chaired CEGCI since the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas. During this time, CEGCI has held five open meetings with member state delegations, experts from international financial institutions and international and regional organizations such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the Pan American Health Organization and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as representatives of civil society. At the meetings, participants have discussed progress made on the various initiatives of the Santiago Plan of Action. These meetings have proven to be an effective forum for discussion among governments and NGOs, providing valuable contributions to the summit process.

Canada has also taken a proactive approach in engaging and consulting civil society in the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) process. In May 1999, DFAIT held consultations on Canada's trade policy with various NGOs, including business, labour, environmental, human rights, international development, academic, consumer, youth and gender groups. In the concluding session, the launching of a new DFAIT Web site on trade negotiations and agreements was announced. Discussion papers on trade policy issues and up-to-date information on consultations with Canadians are available at this site (www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac).

On the margins of the FTAA ministerial meeting in Toronto in November 1999, the Government of Canada sponsored the Americas Civil Society Forum organized by NGOs under the leadership of a Canadian organization, Common Frontiers. A highlight of the Forum was the meeting of 22 FTAA trade ministers and deputy ministers with representatives of civil society organizations from across the Americas. The ministers were presented with a wide range of recommendations that were developed at the Forum and engaged in a question and answer session with participants. This meeting was an unprecedented event in the trade negotiation process. Just as importantly, the Americas Civil Society Forum demonstrated to the different participating countries that such dialogue is feasible and can benefit all parties involved. Canada played a key role in ensuring that the many voices from the Hemisphere could participate in the Forum, both constructively and inclusively.

Canada was instrumental in the establishment of the FTAA Committee of Government Representatives on the Participation of Civil Society at the 1998 trade ministerial. Ministers agreed to continue to hear from representatives of civil society throughout the Hemisphere via this new mechanism. The Government of Canada believes that much progress has been made in engaging our hemispheric partners on civil society issues, taking into account that we are at a very early stage in the FTAA negotiations and in the FTAA dialogue with civil society. Canada will continue to promote ongoing civil society engagement throughout the FTAA negotiations.

In June 1999, Canada's Secretary of State for Latin America and the Caribbean led the Canadian delegation to the 29th OAS General Assembly held in Guatemala City. Members of the Canadian delegation met with representatives of Canadian and regional NGOs on various occasions during the course of the Assembly.

At the Ninth Conference of Spouses of Heads of State and Government of the Americas held in Ottawa (Canada) in October 1999, civil society organizations were included for the first time as a complement in the official program. The NGO fair was toured by the conference delegates and included displays from nearly 100 organizations active in the Hemisphere on issues such as early childhood development, health care and the increased participation of women in society.

In October 2000, DFAIT facilitated a special event at the United Nations headquarters in New York (United States) to highlight the conclusion of the World March of Women 2000 (organized by the Fédération des femmes du Québec). This event provided an opportunity for representatives of the march to present their vision of how poverty and violence affect women and girls around the world and to present government and UN officials with the recommendations emerging from march-related activities worldwide. It also provided participants — including Louise Frechette (Deputy Secretary-General), Angela King (Assistant Secretary-General and Special Advisor on Gender Equality and Advancement of Women), representatives of permanent missions to the UN, and officials from the UN Secretariat and other NGOs — with an opportunity to discuss strategies to address poverty and gender-based violence.

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**Entrust the OAS to encourage support among Governments and civil society organisations, and to promote appropriate programs to carry out this initiative, and request the Inter-American Development Bank to develop and implement, along with interested States and other inter-American institutions, hemispheric financial mechanisms specially devoted to the implementation of programs oriented toward strengthening civil society and public participation mechanisms.**

The Government of Canada remains committed to securing greater participation by NGOs in the activities of the Organization of American States. Canada is seen as an important proponent of civil society because of its support for the establishment of the civil society guidelines and the Committee on Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities (CSC).

The civil society guidelines were designed for civil society organizations seeking greater participation at the OAS. The Office of Summit Follow-up is responsible for the registration of civil society organizations, and the guidelines are available at the OAS Web site (www.oas.org).

The CSC, which was created at the OAS General Assembly meeting in June 1999, is responsible for ensuring clear, transparent and effective procedures for interaction between civil society, national governments and other political organs of the OAS. Further information on the CSC's activities is available via the Internet (www.civil-society.oas.org).

Canada also played a major role in the development and adoption in 2000 of the Inter-American Program on Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality, a program that underlines the need to encourage co-operation between civil society organizations and member states, and recognizes them as partners for promoting and achieving gender equality.

For the first-ever Meeting of Ministers or Highest-Ranking Authorities Responsible for the Advancement of Women of the Members of the OAS, organized by the Inter-American Commission of Women in April 2000, Canada actively encouraged civil society participation. In addition, Canada included two NGOs as part of the official Canadian delegation.

In June 2000, at the 30th General Assembly of the OAS in Windsor (Canada), several events were held that provided civil society groups with the opportunity to voice their opinions on a range of issues. These included events held on the margins of the General Assembly and organized by Canadian NGOs (Rights and Democracy [formerly the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development] and the Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America) to examine democracy and human rights in the Hemisphere. The Windsor General Assembly also marked the first time that representatives from civil society were invited to discuss their concerns in a formal meeting with ministers, which included Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Secretary General of the OAS.

## MIGRANT WORKERS

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**Reaffirm that the promotion and protection of human rights and the fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction by reasons of race, gender, language, nationality, or religion, is a priority for the international community and is the responsibility of every state.**

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* applies to every person present in Canada, regardless of their immigration status. The Human Rights Program at Canadian Heritage has a mandate to promote the development, understanding, respect and enjoyment of human rights in Canada.

Canada is party to a number of international instruments for the protection of human rights, including the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the UN Convention Against Torture, and the International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Canada is also subject to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man.

Canada has been an active and committed member of the UN Commission on Human Rights for all but 4 (1984-1988) of the last 25 years. Canada has a longstanding record of leadership in this forum, considered the main global intergovernmental forum on human rights. Canada leads on more resolutions than any other single country, including annual or biennial resolutions on freedom of opinion and expression, mass exoduses, treaty body reform, impunity, violence against women and indigenous issues.

Canada has been an active supporter of human rights in peace support operations. It stresses in international forums the importance of ensuring that a significant human rights element is included in all peace support operations. Modern peacekeeping support operations are much more demanding and complex. In light of this, the deployment of police and civilian experts is proving especially valuable. Canada has led in the effort to ensure that the UN Security Council considers aspects of peacekeeping beyond the core military functions. In particular, Canada pursued the protection of civilians in armed conflict as a priority theme throughout its tenure on the Security Council, ensuring that Council discussions and decisions on peacekeeping mandates and sanctions regimes increasingly reflect concern for civilian protection. In this context, Canada also drafted and led negotiations on two resolutions adopted by the Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Government of the United Kingdom (through the Department for International Development) are developing materials for a training course on gender and peace support operations. The overall objective of this initiative is to strengthen peace support operations by enabling both civilian and military personnel in peace support operations to improve their abilities to integrate gender awareness and analysis into the policies and practices of their work. It was developed through a series of consultations with organizations and individuals involved in peace support operations from around the world and was facilitated by the Lester B. Pearson International Peacekeeping Centre, based in Cornwallis (Canada). The training materials have undergone initial development and will soon enter a testing phase with various target groups and in specific situations.

Canada has urged the UN to implement with greater speed and effectiveness the non-military aspects of mission mandates, such as those related to linkages with humanitarian relief agencies, judicial capacity building or civil reconstruction. Moreover, Canada encourages greater coherence among the political, military, humanitarian and human rights arms of the UN system in order to ensure that peace support operations address the full range of needs at the field level. Canada is also actively helping the UN to identify skilled professionals to undertake these tasks.

The UN also acknowledges the importance of having police in peacekeeping operations. These officers monitor, train and mentor local police, help restore civil order, support the rule of law and foster civil reconciliation. From Haiti to Kosovo to East Timor, it is widely acknowledged that the establishment of ordinary civil order (rule of law) based on democratic policing principles is the prerequisite to achieving any measure of human security.

**Seek full compliance with, and protection of, the human rights of all migrants, including migrant workers, and their families, and adopt effective measures, including the strengthening of public awareness, to prevent and eradicate violations of human rights and eliminate all forms of discrimination against them, particularly racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance.**

Canada is a diverse country with citizens and residents with origins from around the world. The cultural policy of the Government of Canada is based on the principle of respect for cultural diversity. Canadian cultural institutions such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the Canada Council for the Arts and the National Film Board have all taken steps to ensure that diversity, including the migrant experience, is reflected in their programming and activities.

Through this broad spectrum of cultural institutions, Canada has put in place a wide range of initiatives that encourage and promote respect for the cultural identity of migrants. These policies have their legislative grounding in the *Multiculturalism Act and Broadcasting Act*.

Human rights legislation and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* prohibit discrimination on numerous grounds including national or ethnic origin, colour or race. The Canadian *Criminal Code* also prohibits the communication of hate propaganda, and the fact that an offence was motivated by hatred may be considered an aggravating factor in sentencing.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada has developed promotional activities and products to help counter prejudice against newcomers to Canada and to celebrate the immigrant story.

**Comply with the applicable international human rights instruments and, consistent with the legal framework of each country, guarantee the human rights of all migrants, including migrant workers and their families.**

**Citizenship and Immigration Canada**

Through Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Government of Canada works closely with governments in the Caribbean and Mexico on the issue of seasonal agricultural workers recruited to work on Canadian farms. Two programs govern the movement of such workers (one for the Caribbean, the other for Mexico) under which workers are ensured basic rights, such as the right to prescribed wage rates similar to those offered to Canadians doing the same jobs and the right to medical care. Annual meetings bring together all parties to evaluate these programs and resolve any issues that may arise. Canadian government officials also actively ensure that all parties, including growers, abide by Canadian laws. Canada's international partners are very supportive of these programs, and the number of agricultural workers sent to Canada continues to increase.

**Reaffirm the sovereign right of each State to formulate and apply its own legal framework and policies for migration, including the granting of permission to migrants to enter, stay, or exercise economic activity, in full conformity with applicable international instruments relating to human rights and in a spirit of cooperation.**

**Citizenship and Immigration Canada**

Since 1996, Canada has participated in the Regional Conference on Migration, also known as the Puebla Process, whose membership comprises all North and Central American countries and the Dominican Republic. The Conference provides a forum to discuss migration policies within a context of full respect for each member country's sovereignty. All member countries undertake a number of initiatives in compliance with a plan of action that focusses on areas such as migration policy, development and migration, combatting migrant trafficking, international co-operation for the return of extra-regional migrants, human rights of migrants and technical co-operation.

The Government of Canada (through the Canadian International Development Agency and Citizenship and Immigration Canada), the Government of El Salvador and the International Organization on Migration jointly sponsored a seminar on migrant women and children held in San Salvador in February 2000. The seminar proceedings have just been published by the International Organization on Migration with funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada. As a follow-up to the seminar's conclusions, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Government of Mexico jointly sponsored a workshop on migrant street children as part of the Fifth International Metropolis Conference held in Vancouver (Canada) in November 2000.

In September 2000, Canada hosted the first official country visit of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, Ms. Gabriela Rodriguez Pizarro. Ms. Rodriguez visited Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa and was able to speak to a wide range of federal and provincial government officials, civil society representatives and migrants. The Special Rapporteur will prepare a report on her visit to Canada, which will be submitted to the April 2001 session of the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva (Switzerland) as an annex to her main thematic report.

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**Seek full respect for, and compliance with, the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, especially as it relates to the right of nationals, regardless of their immigration status, to communicate with a consular officer of their own state in case of detention.**

The Government of Canada is active internationally in ensuring respect for and compliance with the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. Canada respects the choice of individuals who are detained in Canada and who are nationals of another state, regardless of their immigration status in Canada, to contact the consular representative of that other state. Similarly, the Government of Canada vigorously defends the right of any Canadian citizen or permanent resident who becomes subject to arrest or any form of detention in a foreign country to communicate with a Canadian consular official for the purpose of obtaining consular assistance in accordance with the Convention.

**Protect the rights of all migrant workers and their families, consistent with each country's internal legal framework, by taking steps, in case they do not exist, to: 1) provide, with respect to working conditions, the same legal protection as for national workers; 2) facilitate, as appropriate, the payment of full wages owed when the worker has returned to his/her country, and allow them to arrange the transfer of their personal effects; 3) recognise the rights of citizenship and nationality of the children of all migrant workers who may be entitled to such rights, and any other rights they may have in each country; 4) encourage the negotiation of bilateral or multilateral agreements, regarding the remission of social security benefits accrued by migrant workers; 5) protect all migrant workers and their families, through law enforcement and information campaigns, from becoming victims of exploitation and abuse from alien smuggling; 6) prevent abuse and mistreatment of all migrant workers by employers or any authorities entrusted with the enforcement of migration policies and border control; and 7) encourage and promote respect for the cultural identity of all migrants.**

Under the North American Agreement on Labour Co-operation (NAALC), Canada, Mexico and the United States are committed to promoting 11 guiding principles, including the elimination of employment discrimination and protection of migrant workers. In addition, Article 11 of the Agreement states that co-operative activities between the parties shall be undertaken in a number of specific areas including migrant workers. The Canada-Chile Agreement on Labour Co-operation contains similar provisions.

In February 2000, the Conference on Agricultural Migrant Labour in North America was held in Los Angeles (United States). This trilateral activity was organized by the labour departments of the three parties as part of the Co-operative Work Program of the NAALC. The purpose of the conference was to enable experts from government, business, labour, NGOs and academia to examine legal, social and economic issues facing agricultural migrant workers and their families in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Specific issues relating to migrant labour included economic impact, workers' profiles, legal practices, common problems, current programs and future measures.

The workshop on Best Practices Concerning Migrant Workers and Their Families, held in Santiago (Chile) in June 2000, was organized by the International Organization on Migration with the co-operation of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Latin American Demographic Centre. It took place under the auspices of the Government of the United States in compliance with the 1998 Santiago Plan of Action. The United States is the designated co-ordinator responsible for the implementation of the migrant workers section of the Plan of Action, with El Salvador and Mexico serving as co-co-ordinators. As host of the Third Summit of the Americas to be held in April 2001 in Quebec City, Canada was invited to participate. The workshop gathered non-governmental experts in a number of fields dealing with the protection of migrant workers and their families in the Americas. The Canadian best practices on temporary migrant workers from the Caribbean and Mexico to Canada and the Canadian experience regarding preservation of cultural identity, integration and citizenship were viewed as excellent models on which to draw.

The Government of Canada, as host of the Third Summit of the Americas, actively participated in the Symposium on International Migration in the Americas held in San José (Costa Rica) in September 2000, under the auspices of the Summit of the Americas process. The meeting examined issues pertaining to international migration and brought together representatives from governments, a large contingent of NGOs, academia and international organizations. The NGOs held a parallel forum and presented their suggestions to the Symposium plenary on the last day. At the final session, the government representatives agreed that international migration was an important aspect of hemispheric affairs that needed to be addressed at the upcoming Summit of the Americas.

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**Support the activities of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights with regard to the protection of the rights of migrant workers and their families, particularly through the Special Rapporteur for Migrant Workers.**

In 1999, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) requested to be admitted as an observer to the Regional Conference on Migration (the Puebla Process), which provides a forum for discussion and exchange of best practices on migration and related issues within a regional context. Canada values the IACHR's work and supported its request to be admitted as an observer to the Conference. At the Fifth Regional Conference on Migration, which took place in Washington, D.C. (United States) in March 2000, the IACHR's request to join the Conference as an international organization observer was accepted because of the close relationship it maintains between human rights issues and migration.

## STRENGTHENING MUNICIPAL AND REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS

At the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas, governments agreed to encourage the participation of civil society in local decision making, and to consider issues of power and resource sharing between national and local governments. To this end, they agreed to undertake the following measures.

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**Within their legal framework and within a reasonable time, establish or strengthen mechanisms for the participation of groups of society in the process of local and other sub-national decision-making, such as open public hearings and public budget reviews, and promote transparency in local and other sub-national Government finance operations.**

**In accordance with legislation at all levels, provide for financing options for local and other sub-national Governments, including groups of local Governments, such as through transfers of national revenue, access to private capital markets, and authority for raising revenue locally, in order to expand the delivery of quality services as well as provide for training opportunities to strengthen local and other sub-national administrative capabilities.**

**In accordance with circumstances and the legal framework of each country, study the possible transfer of additional national governmental functions to local and other sub-national levels as well as the possibility for enhancing such authorities.**

**Share their experiences and information from existing and future programs supported by multilateral and bilateral cooperation institutions such as the Organisation of American States, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank, to facilitate the implementation of this initiative.**

### Canadian Municipalities

Canada has three levels of government: federal, provincial/territorial and municipal. The cohesion and success of the Canadian system over the many challenges of the past 134 years has required a collaborative approach on the part of all levels of government. The Constitution has apportioned responsibility for local government to the provinces and territories. The degree and manner in which these have delegated authority to municipalities varies from province/territory to province/territory.

The provincial/territorial and federal governments are secondary sources of funding for Canadian municipalities. As a general rule, the revenue collection of municipalities under their own authority is limited to property taxes, certain categories of licensing fees, user fees and fines. Provincial/territorial legislation across Canada prohibits municipalities from entering into budget deficits. The scope of the services provided varies considerably according to population and tax base.

While practices vary among provinces/territories and among rural and urban areas, candidates for municipal elective office generally present themselves as individuals rather than members of national or provincial/territorial political parties. In some cases, candidates present themselves as members of municipal parties.

For purposes of comparison, the authority exercised by U.S. states over municipalities is significantly less than that exercised by Canadian provinces/territories. Inevitably, municipalities press for greater autonomy, and the push/pull of this process is the subject of ongoing representations and negotiations. However, the test of any system of government lies in the quality of life enjoyed by its citizens. By this measure, the Canadian system has had considerable success. Canada has been ranked first in the world by the United Nations for overall quality and conditions of life, and many of its civic administrations are regarded as international role models.

## STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE AMERICAS

With a strong record of achievement and high professional standards, municipalities and municipal experts across Canada have been increasingly engaged in providing assistance to local governments and communities in the Americas. Reflecting this interest, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is supporting a wide variety of programs in the Americas such as intermunicipal co-operation, city diagnosis, and participatory planning and management. A fundamental concern is the quality of life and good governance in both rural and urban communities.

Mutual support and education about best practices increasingly takes place through many avenues including direct municipality-to-municipality dialogue and partnership. However, the principal source of Canadian assistance for local government in the Americas is CIDA. Programs funded by CIDA are developed with a broad range of partners. Key Canadian partners include the International Development Research Centre, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Canadian Urban Institute, the Canadian Institute of Planners, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, the Centre for Urban and Community Studies (University of Toronto), the Centre for Human Settlements (University of British Colombia), Groupe Interuniversitaire de Montréal, Care Canada, the Centre for Property Studies (University of New Brunswick) and Rooftops Canada. A number of private enterprise consulting firms are also engaged with CIDA in the execution of local and regional government programs.

Canadian support for local governance in Latin American and the Caribbean generally takes these forms:

– demand-driven programming (CIDA designs programs in response to requests from municipalities, local communities, sectoral ministries or central agencies of national governments);

– partnership (expertise transfer between partners in Canada and the region);

– technical assistance (facilitating decentralization reforms and developing the competence of local governments to bridge the gap between capacities and responsibilities, including training the trainers); and

– interactive implementation (to address the pace of reforms and the need to adapt to a changing pace, electoral milestones and absorptive capacity).

### Regional Initiatives with Canadian Partners

The Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI) is a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder project developed by Industry Canada, in partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. In Latin America, SCI is advancing a pilot project with the city of Salvador (Brazil). The goal is to develop integrated strategies and solutions to municipal management challenges through co-operation and partnership across a wide range of problems generated by rapid urbanization. Industry Canada is in the process of expanding its SCI projects to San José (Costa Rica) and Cordoba (Argentina).

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has been actively engaged internationally in support of decentralization programs, the development of municipal associations, poverty reduction, and local development planning and financing. Generally, the FCM and the Canadian Urban Institute (like other Canadian NGOs) engage the professional support of elected and official staff of Canadian municipalities in their overseas work on a voluntary, no-fee basis. For example:

– in Chile, the FCM initiated five partnerships among municipalities and with municipal associations. One partnership has engaged Amos, Quebec (Canada) with Coyhaique, a remote rural area in southern Chile, to promote tourism opportunities and improve governance. Other Chilean partnerships have focussed on the development of computer skills; urban economic planning; securing collaboration with neighbouring municipalities; the transfer of technology for integrated territory development; recreational programs adapted for different population sectors, particularly youth, women and the elderly; waste management, including the involvement of teachers and children; and the establishment of micro-regional municipal associations for collaborative economic development and poverty reduction. The FCM has facilitated a partnership between the Union des Municipalités du Québec and the Asociacion Chilena de Municipalidades to develop capacities for training and lobbying, municipal finance and public security;

– the FCM has promoted partnership arrangements between Canadian and Salvadoran municipalities. These focus on training, increasing the role of the municipalities in the processes of governance and restructuring (including dealing with the implications of decentralization), computerization of municipal finance, and waste management (including composting and recycling with the participation of youth). One such partnership links the city of Toronto (Canada) with Soyapango, an industrial city in El Salvador with high levels of poverty and unemployment, poor housing and health problems. The project emphasizes strengthening municipal administration, environmental protection, sanitation services and youth-oriented activities;

– in Nicaragua, the FCM has developed a partnership project through which the municipality of Chelsea (Canada) is providing police training with an emphasis on human rights protection;

– the FCM is engaged in a municipal strengthening project with the firm Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu in five municipalities in northern Peru. The aims are to modernize municipal finance and management and to develop participatory practices in local decision making;

– the Centre d'études et de coopération internationale (CECI) has developed a partnership with the FCM to revitalize socio-economic activities in the *zona de paz* area of San Marcos (Guatemala), where the FCM is supporting municipal capacity development; and

– the FCM commissioned the Centre for Urban and Community Studies at the University of Toronto to undertake two studies, one on the role of local governments in the developing world and the other directed to the experience of Mexico, Chile and Ecuador in delegation of responsibility to local government.

In the mid-1990s, the Centre for Urban and Community Studies engaged in a global urban research initiative that focussed on governance and the decentralization process in regions around the world including Brazil, the Andean countries, Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean. With assistance from the International Development Research Centre of Canada, the World Bank and the Ford Foundation, this study led to the book *Cities and Governance, New Directions in Latin America, Asia and Africa*. In co-operation with the central government and the three largest cities in Bolivia, the Centre for Urban and Community Studies, supported by CIDA, developed projects to increase the country's capacity to provide policy and technical training on urban development, exchange information on best practices, and strengthen the capacity of large Bolivian municipalities to prepare sustainable urban development plans consistent with decentralization reforms.

The Canadian Urban Institute has a range of programs in the Caribbean and Latin America. For example, one project has taken place in Paraguay, with the support of CIDA, to strengthen the management capacity of municipal governments on the sustainable development issue. Also, in association with KPMG (Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler) Canada, the Institute is managing a project with the Jamaican Ministry of Local Government on integrated governance in capacity development and strategic land use planning.

Following the 1992 UN Earth Summit, and linked to the UN Habitat Agenda, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) launched a program entitled Local Agenda 21. The goal of this program was to jointly design, document and evaluate local strategic planning that is applicable to a variety of municipal and development contexts.

In Brazil, ICLEI, with other partners, applied these guidelines to integrate all stakeholders, including scavengers, in the city of Santos in the development of a waste recycling program. A participatory budgeting program has been designed by ICLEI with local partners for Porto Alegre. Its purpose is to promote democratization and transparency of local government structures and procedures, in part by establishing strong links and commitments between local government and the local community. A community reforestation project has been developed for Rio de Janeiro with the objective of controlling erosion, land slides and flood risks.

In Santiago (Chile), ICLEI and public and private sector partners have been engaged in a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach to a technology transfer project funded by CIDA. A series of pilot projects has been developed to promote the adoption of sound ecological practices to improve the sanitary and environmental conditions of housing for low-income households; design and implement the first stage of a municipal environmental assessment process; address the serious atmospheric contamination in Santiago, including by transferring Canadian technology for alternative fuel systems to Chilean companies; and formulate strategies for transportation demand management through land use planning and neighbourhood design. In Quito (Ecuador), ICLEI, in collaboration with multi-sectoral local partners, has embarked on a program to demonstrate the effectiveness of community consultation and joint planning in promoting the revival of the city's most impoverished area.

In 1999, ICLEI, in partnership with the UN Centre for Regional Development and with support from CIDA and the World Bank, undertook a project entitled Innovative Cases for Air and Climate Protection and Transportation, Land Use and Energy Management in Latin America. The project examined best practices as part of the Global Cities for Climate Protection Campaign.

The Federation of Municipalities of the Central American Isthmus and the International Development Research Centre of Canada have signed an agreement on activities aimed at institutional and local capacity building in municipal management in Central America. This has been arranged through the Environmental Management Secretariat for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Groupe Interuniversitaire de Montréal, in collaboration with the Centre for Urban and Community Studies at the University of Toronto, initiated a program in 1997 that connects five Canadian universities with four in other countries of the Americas. The purpose of the program is to improve responses to local training, teaching and research needs in Port-au-Prince (Haiti), Port of Spain (Trinidad and Tobago), Puebla (Mexico), San José (Costa Rica) and San Salvador (El Salvador). The program is also developing a regional learning and information network in the field of urban development and, in 1997, opened an interactive information system of spatialized data for cities within the partnership.

The Canadian Institute of Planners has mounted projects in the capital cities of El Salvador and Trinidad and Tobago on professionalism and the development of best practices in urban and regional planning that are appropriate for each country. The programs involve organizational capacity building and north-south knowledge and skills transfers. The Institute is also supporting the development of a regional information network in the field of urban planning.

With CIDA support since 1983, World University Services of Canada has been engaged in projects to reverse the deterioration of water and sanitation in rural and urban areas in eastern Peru, including Lima, thereby reducing the incidence of cholera and alleviating poverty.

## CORRUPTION

Corruption continues to be a serious threat to the stability of democratic institutions in the Americas and an impediment to economic integration. To mitigate the problems resulting from corruption, Santiago Summit leaders endorsed a number of anti-corruption initiatives.

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**Resolutely support the Inter-American Program to Combat Corruption and implement the actions established therein, particularly the adoption of a strategy to achieve prompt ratification of the 1996 Inter-American Convention against Corruption, the drafting of codes of conduct for public officials, in accordance with respective legal frameworks, the study of the problem of laundering assets or proceeds derived from corruption, and the promotion of information campaigns on the ethical values that sustain the democratic system.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

The adoption of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption in Caracas (Venezuela) in March 1996 was a landmark achievement, at the time constituting the first and most far-reaching document of its kind in the world. Canada signed the Convention in June 1999 during the 29th Regular Session of the OAS General Assembly in Guatemala City and ratified it in June 2000 at the 30th General Assembly in Windsor (Canada). Canada strongly supports the Inter-American Program for Cooperation to Fight Corruption and has been an active participant in the Working Group on Probity and Public Ethics, the OAS body tasked with implementing the actions established by the Program.

One of the Program's key recommendations is the creation of consultative mechanisms to share best practices and promote the exchange of information among OAS member states. Its goal is to involve international organizations, international financial institutions and civil society representatives in ensuring transparency and reducing corruption. To this end, Canada financially supported a roundtable discussion on transparency and governance in the Americas, organized by the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL) in Montreal (Canada) in February 2000. This event brought together experts from throughout the Hemisphere, including representatives from academia, NGOs, international financial institutions and the OAS, to discuss regional anti-corruption initiatives and policy challenges in the lead-up to the Third Summit of the Americas, to be held in Quebec City (Canada) in April 2001.

The Canadian Parliament adopted the *Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) Act* in June 2000. The Act creates a mandatory reporting system for suspicious financial transactions and for the cross-border movement of large amounts of money; it is expected to enter into force in 2001.

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**Sponsor in Chile a Symposium on Enhancing Probity in the Hemisphere to be held no later than August 1998, in order to consider, among other topics, the scope of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption, and the implementation of the aforementioned program. They will also resolutely support the holding of workshops sponsored by the Organisation of American States to disseminate the provisions set forth in the Inter-American Convention against Corruption.**

The Symposium on Enhancing Probity in the Hemisphere, held in Santiago (Chile) in November 1998, marked an important Santiago Summit mandate. Canada, along with Argentina and Venezuela, was among the group of rapporteurs that produced a summary report of the Santiago discussions. Among other things, the report emphasized the importance of ratifying the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption; of involving civil society organizations and international financial institutions in anti-corruption activities; and of establishing an institutional mechanism within the OAS that would follow-up on the actions undertaken in compliance with the commitments made by states parties to the Convention and facilitate the adoption of measures to that end. As a result, the 1999 OAS General Assembly adopted a resolution instructing the Permanent Council to resume the activities of the Working Group on Probity and Public Ethics.

**Foster within the OAS framework, and in accordance with the mandate set forth in the Inter-American Program to Combat Corruption, appropriate follow-up on the progress achieved under the Inter-American Convention against Corruption.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

In addition to being an active participant in hemispheric anti-corruption activities, Canada supports the development of a follow-up mechanism that will ensure the implementation of Convention provisions. This mechanism should be flexible, sanctionless and based on consent, mutual respect and general principles of international law.

A resolution was adopted at the OAS General Assembly in Windsor (Canada) to recommend, by the end of 2000, "the most appropriate model that State Parties could use, if they think fit, to monitor implementation of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption." Canada was an active participant in the development of such a follow-up mechanism, which was approved by OAS Permanent Council in January 2001, and forwarded to States Parties for their consideration.

**Promote in their domestic legislation the obligation for senior public officials, and those at other levels when the law so establishes, to declare or disclose their personal assets and liabilities to the appropriate agency.**

Canada has had conflict of interest prevention guidelines since 1974, which were consolidated by the introduction of conflict of interest and post-employment codes for federal public office holders and public servants in 1985. The aim of these codes is to enhance public confidence in the integrity of public officials and the decision-making process in government. Canada's provinces and territories have legislation or guidelines for their own public officials.

At the federal level, the Conflict of Interest and Post-Employment Code for Public Office Holders applies to ministers, secretaries of state, parliamentary secretaries and all individuals appointed on a full-time basis by the Governor-in-Council to departments, agencies, boards, commissions and tribunals. The Code also applies to individuals working in ministers' offices. Individuals appointed on a part-time basis by the Governor-in-Council are subject to the principles of the Code.

This Code was strengthened by the Prime Minister in 1994, with the creation of the position of Ethics Counsellor. The Ethics Counsellor is responsible for the administration of the *Lobbyists Registration Act*, the Lobbyists' Code of Conduct and the Conflict of Interest and Post-Employment Code for Public Office Holders.

Under the *Lobbyists Registration Act*, individuals who are paid to lobby federal public office holders must register and disclose information such as the name of their client, corporate or organizational employer and any parent or subsidiary companies that might benefit from the lobbying; the organizational members of coalition groups; the specific subject matter to be lobbied; the names of the federal departments or agencies contacted; the source and amount of any government funding received; and the communication techniques used to lobby. This information is public, and the registry can be accessed on the Internet (http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/ethics).

The Lobbyists' Code of Conduct is a mandatory ethical conduct guide for all lobbyists in their dealings with federal officials. Rules deal with transparency, confidentiality and conflict of interest.

The Conflict of Interest and Post-Employment Code for Public Office Holders is not a law, but compliance with its provisions is a condition of holding office. Emphasis is placed on integrity, expressed by a set of principles that set out the high standard of ethics to which public office holders must aspire. At the base of the system is the confidential disclosure made by office holders of all assets, investments, debts and outside activities. The Code specifies which assets and investments may be retained and which ones must be publicly declared, divested or placed under a blind trust or blind management agreement. Certain activities are prohibited, such as practising a profession, managing or operating a business or commercial activity, holding directorships or other offices in financial, commercial or professional organizations, and serving as a paid consultant. The Code also lists specific conditions and circumstances under which gifts, hospitality and other benefits may be accepted, subject to a public declaration.

Further, there are rules applicable on leaving public office that prohibit a former office holder from switching sides or from using information not publicly available. A "cooling off" period is applicable on accepting outside employment and on making representations to government.

The Code for the Public Service has been in existence since 1985. It is similar to the one for public officials but is less stringent. For example, public servants would make a confidential disclosure of assets, debts or outside activities only if any of these were to have some bearing on the exercise of their duties and responsibilities. Only senior public servants are subject to a one-year post-employment limitation period.

In May 1999, the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada established an Office of Values and Ethics to provide guidance to federal departments on values and ethics and to undertake the review of the conflict of interest Code for the Public Service. In addition to this Code, departments and most other federal government agencies have established rules appropriate to their particular culture and circumstances.

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**Encourage the approval of effective and specific measures to combat all forms of corruption, bribery, and related unlawful practices in commercial transactions, among others.**

The Government of Canada has in place measures to combat corruption, bribery and related unlawful practices in commercial transactions, as well as other unlawful activity. The *Corruption of Foreign Public Officials Act* entered into force in February 1999. The Act includes three offences: bribing a foreign public official, laundering property and proceeds and possession of property or proceeds.

The *Corruption of Foreign Public Officials Act* came into force as part of Bill S-21, which also amended the *Income Tax Act* and the *Criminal Code*. Section 3 of the *Corruption of Foreign Public Officials Act* (the offence of bribing a foreign public official) was added to the list of offences found in section 67.5 of the *Income Tax Act* to deny the tax deductibility of such bribes. All the offences (sections 3, 4 and 5) in the *Corruption of Foreign Public Officials Act* were included in the definition of an "enterprise crime offence" in section 462.3 of the *Criminal Code*. The Bill also added the *Criminal Code* offences of municipal corruption, selling or purchasing office, and influencing appointments or dealing in offices to the definition of an enterprise crime offence. In addition, sections 3, 4 and 5 of the *Corruption of Foreign Public Officials Act* were added to the list of offences under section 183 of the *Criminal Code* to permit the police to gather evidence in these cases through the lawful use of wiretap or other electronic surveillance.

Canada participates actively in anti-corruption activities in other forums, including the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the OAS, the United Nations, the G8 and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Canada participated actively in the negotiation of the United Nations Transnational Organized Crime Convention, which contains anti-corruption provisions. Canada also supports the notion of a separate UN instrument on corruption. In Canada's view, such an instrument should focus not just on criminal measures to fight corruption, but should also promote good governance through non-criminal measures as well.

In April 2000, the OSCE Economic Forum adopted a resolution, based on a Canadian draft, in which the OSCE agreed to address the issue of corruption in the context of good governance and the rule of law.

At the OECD, Canada has been an active participant in the Working Group on Bribery in International Business Transactions, and in the Working Group's monitoring and promotion of the full implementation of the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions.

## FINANCING OF ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS

As part of their commitment to build stronger democratic institutions throughout the Hemisphere, leaders identified the financing of electoral campaigns as an important agenda item at the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas and agreed to adopt the following measures:

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**Propose the exchange of experiences that may be used as a support for each country so that, according to their own realities and legal systems, they adopt or develop internal rules that regulate contributions to electoral campaigns and independent internal control mechanisms.**

**Consider the proposals resulting from the Meeting of Government Representatives on Contributions to Electoral Campaigns, held in Caracas in February 1998, under the auspices of the OAS.**

**Adopt or consider, as appropriate, measures to prevent financial contributions to electoral campaigns derived from organised crime and drug trafficking. Similarly, they will promote the adoption of measures designed to ensure transparency in the origin of all contributions.**

## Elections Canada

The Government of Canada, through Elections Canada, continues to strengthen its domestic electoral process while responding to the evolving needs and expectations of the electorate. Elections Canada is the independent non-partisan agency responsible for the conduct of federal elections and referendums in Canada. Through its International Services Directorate, the Agency is also a strong supporter of democratic development around the world, providing expert advisory and technical services.

Working in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Canadian International Development Agency and international organizations such as the Organization of American States, Elections Canada provides briefing sessions to delegations visiting Canada from other countries throughout the region, including delegations from Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti and Mexico. The briefing sessions have been ongoing since 1984 and have focussed on such issues as:

- election financing and spending by candidates and political parties;
- examination and disclosure of financial returns;
- reimbursement of expenses according to formulas laid down in the *Canada Elections Act*;
- financial audit and performance measurement activities at Elections Canada, (i.e., auditing and publishing the annual fiscal returns from registered political parties);
- review of election expenses returns of candidates and parties;
- examination of financial returns of registered referendum committees;
- review of election expenses returns for compliance with the legislation; and
- internal finances at Elections Canada (i.e., fiscal and financial policies, planning and systems; costing and budgeting; and internal auditing and accounting operations, including payment of election workers, performance measurement and corporate reporting).

In July 1998, Elections Canada hosted the Fourth Conference of the Inter-American Union of Electoral Organizations (often referred to by its Spanish acronym, UNIORE).[1] Electoral authorities from 24 countries in the Hemisphere met in Ottawa (Canada) to promote shared democratic electoral values. Electoral authorities exchanged strategies and experiences on issues such as the financing of political parties and candidates, the control and monitoring of expenditures/accountability, and electoral conflict prevention and resolution. The representatives also looked at ways to improve the electoral process in their respective countries. Canada viewed the conference as an opportunity to strengthen democracy and its ties with practitioners in the Americas for joint long-term projects on developing democratic electoral processes throughout the region.

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[1] Created in 1991, the Unión Interamericana de Organismos Electorales (UNIORE) sprang from a desire by Central American and Caribbean countries to link themselves with electoral authorities in South America. UNIORE's membership now includes electoral representatives from 24 countries. Canada joined UNIORE in 1992.

Canada's Chief Electoral Officer was in Mexico City for the July 2000 Mexican elections as a guest of the Mexican electoral authority, the Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE). Prior to that, the President of the IFE spoke at a conference organized in Ottawa in March 2000 by Elections Canada. The Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, the Minister of State (the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons who is also the Minister responsible for electoral matters), and a representative of Canada's Reform Party also addressed the parliamentarians, diplomats, academics, NGOs and journalists participating in this event. The conference was the second in a series on the development of democracy in Mexico, organized by Elections Canada beginning in 1997. The conferences are another mark of Canada's co-operation with the IFE, which began in 1993, when a group of Mexican electoral representatives came to Canada to learn more about the Canadian electoral system and to give Elections Canada staff an overview of the Mexican system. Since then, the IFE and Elections Canada have met many times for talks; their ties are allowing both countries to strengthen their respective electoral systems through professional and technical co-operation projects.

In May 2000, Royal Assent was given to a comprehensive reform and restructuring of the *Canada Elections Act*, formally adopted in 1920. The Act imposes limits on political party election expenses, requiring registered parties and candidates to have designated agents responsible for election finances and to publicly disclose election campaign contributions. It also limits the extent to which third parties can engage in election advertising. Third parties are groups or individuals who engage in election advertising but who do not field candidates; the Act prohibits collusion to circumvent the expense limits and requires public disclosure of election contributions.

The *Canada Elections Act* prohibits anonymous donations to political parties and candidates, including anonymous donations by third parties for advertising. The Act makes it an offence to offer a bribe in relation to voting or to intimidate voters; it also prohibits interference in elections by persons not residing in Canada and prohibits the use of broadcasts outside Canada that are related to Canadian elections and attempt to influence how Canadians vote.

Finally, the *Canada Elections Act* continues the prohibition, which applies to all candidates in an election, against signing pledges that would limit their freedom to vote in Parliament after having been elected.

Beyond the *Canada Elections Act* are various other Canadian laws that deal with bribery, influence peddling and other serious conflicts of interest.

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and Canadian International Development Agency**

Canada recognizes the increasing concern in the Hemisphere that democracy may be threatened by campaign contributions that undermine the integrity of the electoral process. To this end, Canada has engaged in several activities designed to strengthen electoral campaigns in Latin America and the Caribbean.

A meeting of Government Representatives on Electoral Campaign Contributions was held in Caracas (Venezuela) in February 1998. At the meeting, 10 recommendations were adopted:

- to continue the work of compiling the laws and regulations in regard to campaign financing;
- to promote the exchange of information on laws and regulations on this subject;
- to provide consulting services regarding laws and regulations at the request of member states;
- to develop model legislation for and conduct comparative studies on electoral campaign financing;
- to encourage the dissemination of measures to control electoral campaign financing in the different countries;
- to foster the exchange of information and experiences among the agencies in each member state in charge of supervising electoral campaigns;
- to exchange information on projects to control illegal financing across national borders;
- to promote meetings among academic centres and other institutions of civil society with a view to analyzing problems concerning electoral campaign financing;
- to hold a meeting during the year on the ongoing evaluation of electoral campaign financing; and
- to urge the Permanent Council, through the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs, to continue to study electoral campaign contributions and to create a working group to address the matter.

Canada has also supported various electoral observation missions of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy of the Organization of American States. Through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Government of Canada has been a regular contributor to the electoral observation missions for national elections in South American countries such as Peru in April and May 2000, Paraguay in May 1999 and Venezuela in May 2000. In each of these countries, the electoral observation missions stimulated international support for national elections and democratic practices; in Venezuela, they also ensured the impartiality, reliability and accuracy of the electoral process.

In 1999, CIDA contributed $1.5 million to a project in Haiti that sought to provide direct support in the form of materials and services to the electoral process. It also provided support to Peru's national ombudsman's office for its electoral supervision program and to the Peruvian electoral monitoring NGO, Transparencia.

When the elections in Peru proceeded as scheduled in spite of reports of electoral irregularities, Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade proposed that a high-level mission be sent to Peru to assess the situation and to recommend a course of action. This proposal was unanimously adopted by member states at the 30th OAS General Assembly, held in Windsor (Canada) in June 2000; later that same month, an OAS mission presented to the Government of Peru 29 recommendations for strengthening democracy that emerged from consultations with all sectors of Peru's political community and addressed five areas of concern:

- reform of the administration of justice;
- strengthening the rule of law and ensuring the separation of powers;
- freedom of expression and the media;
- electoral reform and supervision and balance of powers; and
- civilian control over the intelligence services and armed forces.

By the end of August 2000, the OAS Special Mission Secretary had taken up residence in Peru and had formed a "dialogue table" of government, opposition and civil society representatives. The dialogue table had a steadying influence on the political landscape during the period of political uncertainty in Peru in late 2000, at times providing the only forum for debating and reaching consensus on important reform legislation. Backed by the desire of Peruvians themselves to bring about democratic change, the dialogue table spearheaded many significant reforms. Every effort is now being made by the international community to help Peru modernize its electoral processes and machinery to ensure a fair and transparent vote on April 8, 2001. The OAS will send an electoral observation mission. The OAS Special Mission is now examining ways in which, in co-operation with the transition government, it might continue to accompany Peru's democratization and reform process.

## PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF ILLICIT CONSUMPTION OF AND TRAFFICKING IN DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES AND OTHER RELATED CRIMES

There is a strong link between drugs, illicit trafficking in firearms, and domestic and international crime. At the 1998 Summit of the Americas, leaders recognized the need to take action against the illicit consumption of and trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances and other related crimes.

Canada is committed to working with its Caribbean and Latin American partners to develop multilateral mechanisms to address the problem of abuse of, and trafficking in, illicit drugs. The following section summarizes what Canada has done to fulfil the Santiago Plan of Action mandates.

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**Continue to develop their national and multilateral efforts in order to achieve full application of the Hemispheric Drug Strategy, and will strengthen this alliance based on the principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial jurisdiction of the States, reciprocity, shared responsibility and an integrated, balanced approach in conformity with their domestic laws.**

**Health Canada**

In June 1998, the Government of Canada released *Canada's Drug Strategy*, which outlined the federal government's role in and commitment to addressing substance abuse. The basic principles of the strategy follow closely those of the Hemispheric Anti-Drug Strategy and are as follows:

- there is a balance between supply reduction and demand reduction;

- prevention is the most cost-effective intervention;

- there is multi-sectoral participation involving federal, provincial and territorial governments; addiction agencies; NGOs; health, social, professional and law enforcement agencies; multilateral organizations; the private sector and community groups;

- programs and policies are formulated with sensitivity to gender, culture and age or stage in life;

- the involvement of target groups in research and in program planning, development and delivery is fundamental — the integral involvement of the ultimate recipients of programs, resources and services is essential to appropriateness, relevance and success;

- prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programs must meet the needs of the drug users, many of whom use more than one drug at a time;

- prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programs must consider the determinants of health and address the underlying factors associated with substance abuse;

- an appropriate and comprehensive legislative framework is necessary; and

- in relation to supply reduction, targeting the upper echelon of criminal organizations involved in the domestic and international drug trade is critical, requiring an increased focus on investigating and prosecuting those who benefit from the proceeds of crime.

The strategy objectives are to reduce the demand for drugs, reduce drug-related mortality and morbidity, improve the effectiveness of and access to substance abuse information and interventions, restrict the supply of illicit drugs, reduce the profitability of illicit drug trafficking, and reduce the cost of substance abuse to Canadian society.

To achieve these goals, the strategy sets out a comprehensive framework recognizing the importance and interdependence of a number of components: research and knowledge development; knowledge dissemination; prevention programming; treatment and rehabilitation; legislation, enforcement and control; national co-ordination; and international co-operation.

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**With the intention of strengthening mutual confidence, dialogue and hemispheric cooperation and on the basis of the aforementioned principles, develop, within the framework of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, a singular and objective process of multilateral governmental evaluation in order to monitor the progress of their individual and collective efforts in the Hemisphere and of all the countries participating in the Summit, in dealing with the diverse manifestations of the problem.**

In response to the call from leaders at the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas, a working group of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), a specialized agency of the OAS, was established to develop a Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) for monitoring the development of national and regional drug control strategies that reflect the objectives of the 1997 Hemispheric Anti-Drug Strategy. The Deputy Solicitor General of Canada was elected chair of the working group. Over an 18-month period, the working group developed the MEM, completing its work at a final meeting in Ottawa (Canada) in August 1999. The MEM was endorsed by CICAD in Uruguay in October 1999.

The MEM is a peer group assessment mechanism developed by the 34 member countries of CICAD. The year 2000 marked the pilot phase of the MEM, which will be an ongoing process requiring a strong commitment by participating governments. The mechanism consists of a questionnaire of 81 indicators through which countries submit information on all aspects of their drug control policies (e.g., demand reduction through health and social programs, supply reduction through legislation and law enforcement), as well as related policies such as money laundering and firearms control. This information was assessed by a governmental experts group (GEG), consisting of 34 experts, one from each of the CICAD countries. The GEG then synthesized the information into national reports on each country and an overall hemispheric report on progress achieved in developing strategies to deal with illicit drugs. The reports were approved by CICAD at a special session of the Commission held in December 2000 and will be given to leaders at the Quebec Summit of the Americas in April 2001.

Canada has given strong support to the MEM. It has contributed approximately $400 000 to CICAD to cover the costs of developing the mechanism, establishing the GEG and supporting the Solidarity Fund, which has provided assistance to countries unable to cover all the costs of participating in the GEG.

The Canadian delegation to the CICAD working group was led by the Office of the Solicitor General of Canada and included representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and Health Canada. Numerous other government departments were involved in preparing the Canadian input to the GEG for the initial evaluations.

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**Strengthen national efforts and international cooperation in order to enhance their national policies and plans with regard to the prevention of illicit drug consumption, and step up measures, particularly at the community level, in schools and those aimed at the most vulnerable groups, such as children and young people, in order to prevent the growth and spread of this consumption and to eliminate financial incentives to illicit trafficking.**

Canada's Drug Strategy takes a comprehensive approach to prevention programming, including mechanisms such as public awareness campaigns, school-based programs, educational resources, programs targeting groups at risk, community-based programs, training of service providers, early intervention initiatives, parenting programs and specialized programs to prevent the adverse consequences of alcohol and other drugs. Health Canada collaborates with the provinces to enhance access to effective treatment and rehabilitation programs. Recently, Health Canada has released best practices in the area of substance abuse, treatment and rehabilitation and will soon be releasing best practices in the prevention of substance abuse among youth.

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**Strengthen national efforts and international cooperation in order to develop appropriate treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration programs with a view to alleviating the serious social effects, human suffering and other adverse effects associated with drug abuse; and increase cooperation in areas such as the collection and analysis of data, standardisation of systems that measure illicit consumption, scientific and technical training and exchange of experiences.**

Health Canada has undertaken a range of activities to address substance abuse, including identifying best practices to address substance use during pregnancy; identifying best practices in treatment for women and youth; providing funding for the National Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Information Service; and, through the Alcohol and Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Program, providing funding to provincial and territorial governments to increase access to effective substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation programs and services. Health Canada is also implementing measures to increase access to effective methadone maintenance treatment for opiate dependence and is conducting research on cocaine use to determine appropriate responses to this emerging problem.

Health Canada funds the Canadian Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use, which acts as an early warning system. It also collaborates with the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission on the development of the Inter-American Drug Information System, the hemispheric epidemiology system.

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**Strengthen national efforts and international cooperation in order to develop or encourage the development of campaigns to foster greater social awareness of the dangers of drug abuse for individuals, the family and society as well as community participation plans; and sensitise public opinion as to the serious effects of drug abuse and the activities of criminal organisations that deal with them, including at the wholesale and retail level.**

Canada's Drug Strategy includes provision for public information campaigns to disseminate information on the effects of illicit drugs. Health Canada also collaborates with the private sector to raise awareness of the harm associated with substance abuse.

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**Strengthen national efforts and international cooperation in order to sensitise public opinion as to the serious effects of drug abuse and the activities of criminal organisations that deal with them, including at the wholesale and retail level; and improve and update cooperative mechanisms to prosecute and extradite individuals charged with the traffic in narcotics and psychotropic substances and other related crimes, in accordance with international agreements, constitutional requirements, and national laws.**

Canada has a well-developed network of mutual legal assistance, extradition and other treaties and agreements. For example, extradition agreements, some dating back to 1883, have been signed with 15 OAS countries. Canada continues to negotiate bilateral agreements to ensure co-ordinated international action against drug trafficking and other crimes.

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**Strengthen national efforts and international cooperation in order to establish or strengthen existing, duly trained and equipped specialised central units responsible for requesting, analysing and exchanging among the competent State authorities information relating to the laundering of the proceeds, assets and instrumentalities used in criminal activities (also known as money laundering).**

Anti-money-laundering legislation approved in June 2000 in the Canadian Parliament has three main components:

- mandatory suspicious transactions reporting: regulated financial institutions as well as other entities and individuals acting as financial intermediaries (e.g., lawyers and accountants) are required to report any financial transactions that they have reasonable grounds to suspect are related to a money-laundering offence;

- reporting of large cross-border movements of money: individuals and entities that import, export or transport large amounts of currency or monetary instruments (e.g., travellers' cheques) across the Canadian border are required to report such activities to the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency; and

- a Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre to receive and analyze reported information about the suspicious transactions and cross-border money movements described above.

**Strengthen national efforts and international cooperation in order to reinforce international and national control mechanisms to impede the illicit traffic and diversion of chemical precursors.**

Canada is not a producer or exporter of significant quantities of the precursor chemicals under international control. Under the *Export and Import Permits Act* there are controls on the export of listed chemicals. Most of the chemicals are listed in the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*. Health Canada is preparing the regulatory framework to introduce all controls on these substances required to adhere to international agreements.

**Strengthen national efforts and international cooperation in order to promote the rapid ratification and entry into force of the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Production and Trafficking of Firearms; promote the approval and prompt application of the Model Regulations on the Control of Arms and Explosives Connected with Drug Trafficking of CICAD; encourage States, that have not already done so, to adopt the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure effective international cooperation to prevent and combat illicit transnational traffic in firearms and ammunition, while establishing, or strengthening, systems to enhance the tracing of firearms used in criminal activity.**

Canada signed the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Production and Trafficking of Firearms in November 1997 and is working actively toward making the legislative and regulatory amendments required for ratification. Canada fully supports the Convention and the Model Regulations and played a key role in negotiating these measures, which support the aims of Canada's domestic firearms legislation. To strengthen international co-operation and the exchange of information, representatives of the Canadian Firearms Registry System are discussing a number of projects involving technical co-operation with various countries throughout the Hemisphere.

**Strengthen national efforts and international cooperation in order to eliminate illicit crops through the increased support of national alternative development programs as well as eradication and interdiction.**

Canada supports the key principles of the international position on alternative development. Through Canadian International Development Agency programming, efforts are made to co-ordinate and where possible integrate existing bilateral programs with alternative development projects.

**Strengthen national drug control commissions, with a view to improving coordination in each country in the planning and implementation of their respective national plans and in streamlining international assistance in this area.**

The Government of Canada provides leadership and undertakes national co-ordination on issues related to substance abuse, working collaboratively with provincial/territorial governments, NGOs, the private sector and multilateral organizations. An Assistant Deputy Ministers' Steering Committee on Substance Abuse, made up of senior federal officials, meets regularly to improve the overall effectiveness of Canada's Drug Strategy.

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**Underscore the valuable contribution of civil society, through its different organisations, in the areas of prevention of illicit consumption, treatment, rehabilitation, and social reintegration of drug addicts.**

Health Canada provides funding to the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, a national NGO that provides a national focus for information on drug and substance abuse. The Department also collaborates closely with other substance abuse NGOs as well as those representing the interests of youth, women and Aboriginal Canadians.

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**Encourage financial institutions to redouble their efforts to prevent money laundering and the appropriate business sectors to strengthen its controls to prevent the diversion of chemical precursors.**

As noted above, anti-money-laundering legislation has been approved in the Canadian Parliament (June 2000). Canada participates in multilateral forums such as the Financial Action Task Force to encourage the development of sufficient controls to combat money laundering.

Canada is also a member of the G-8, whose members committed at the Moscow meeting of ministers of finance in October 1999 to bring their money-laundering regimes into closer alignment, as part of a general effort to extend effective money-laundering standards throughout the world.

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**Give full support to the upcoming Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly which will be held in June 1998 for the purpose of promoting international cooperation with respect to illicit drugs and related crimes and encourage all States to participate actively, at the highest level, in that international meeting. They will make every effort to ensure effective implementation of international narcotics agreements to which they have subscribed, at regional and subregional levels, and for these to operate in consonance with the hemispheric effort and reaffirm their support for CICAD and its fundamental role in the implementation of these agreements.**

Canada played a leading role at the 20th Special Session of the UN General Assembly on the World Drug Problem held June 1998, particularly in the drafting and adoption of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Demand Reduction. In addition to the Declaration, leaders agreed to a political declaration and a number of action plans.

In the declaration of the Special Session, leaders agreed that the goals of reducing demand and supply for drugs were possible within the declared time frames. They also agreed:

- to establish or strengthen national legislation and programs related to amphetamine-type stimulants by 2003;

- to eliminate or significantly reduce the illicit manufacture of and trade in psychotropic drugs and their precursors by 2008;

- that states that have not already done so should adopt national money-laundering legislation by 2003;

- to achieve significant and measurable results in the field of demand reduction by 2008; and

- to affirm the commitment of member states to work with the UN International Drug Control Program to develop strategies that aim to eliminate or significantly reduce the illicit cultivation of coca bush, cannabis and opium poppy by 2008.

As well, leaders agreed to specific commitments to strengthen international anti-drug co-operation in six main areas where weaknesses had been identified during the preparatory process. Action plans were adopted to strengthen controls on precursor chemicals and amphetamine-type stimulants, judicial co-operation, money-laundering controls, demand reduction and alternative development.

Canada is now working within the UN Drug Control Program to ensure international implementation of the results of the Special Session.

## TERRORISM

Terrorism remains a serious threat to human security worldwide. Countries of the Hemisphere have long worked together to counter terrorism. Firm action to prevent terrorist acts was taken at the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas.

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**Encourage States that have not yet done so to sign, ratify, or accede to, as appropriate, the international conventions related to terrorism, in accordance with their respective internal legislation.**

### Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Canada strongly supports international efforts to eliminate terrorism through efforts that are consistent with human rights, the rule of law and protection of fundamental freedoms. Canada has signed all 12 international counter-terrorism conventions; 10 of these have been ratified. A review of domestic measures and legislation is underway to ensure ratification of all UN counter-terrorism conventions. As a preliminary step, Canada is reviewing domestic legislation to strengthen the government's ability to counter terrorism and prevent any activities in Canada that support terrorism, such as fund raising, abuse of charities and abuse of the asylum system.

Canada works multilaterally through international institutions to identify appropriate counter-terrorist mechanisms. Within the UN system, Canada has played a leading role by chairing the working group negotiations on the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombing and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. These two conventions, plus others, form the basis of a strong international legal regime aimed at eliminating safe havens for terrorists.

**Take measures, as agreed in the Declaration and Plan of Action of Lima, in order to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism, applying for that purpose the most decisive will to comply with the general objectives set forth therein.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

In addition to action taken within the UN, Canada also contributes to the fight against terrorism through the OAS. In April 1996, OAS ministers and delegation heads met for the First Specialized Conference on Terrorism in Lima (Peru) to establish measures to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism. At the conference, governments set forth 23 recommendations in the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action. With the exception of ratifying the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombing and the Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, Canada has implemented all of the recommendations contained in the Plan of Action.

**Convene, under the auspices of the Organisation of American States, the 2nd Specialised Inter-American Conference to evaluate the progress attained and to define future courses of action for the prevention, combat and elimination of terrorism.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

To evaluate progress following the Conference in Lima and to define future courses of action against terrorist acts, governments met for the Second Inter-American Specialized Conference on Terrorism in Mar del Plata (Argentina) in November 1998. At the meeting, Canada and its hemispheric partners adopted the Mar del Plata Commitment, which strengthens co-operation against terrorism in the Hemisphere and adds to and reinforces the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action. Of particular note, the Commitment proposed measures to eliminate terrorist fundraising, adopted guidelines for hemispheric co-operation regarding terrorist acts and activities, and established a continuing institutional framework for discussion on terrorism within the OAS through the creation of the Inter-American Committee on Terrorism. Canada fully supports the Committee and attended its first meeting in Miami in October 1999, where the work program for the Committee was finalized. Canada will continue to participate in Committee activities and will attend the second meeting, scheduled for 2001 in Washington, D.C. (United States).

## BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND SECURITY AMONG STATES

Peace and security are vital for the well-being of all peoples and the maintenance of democratic institutions in the Hemisphere. At the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas, leaders recognized the importance of this issue as well as the need to strengthen international co-operation for the security of small island states.

The Government of Canada is a strong proponent of confidence- and security-building measures generally, and supports the above-mentioned initiatives to build confidence and security among states. The following section outlines Canada's interest in enhancing the security of states and individuals throughout the Hemisphere.

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**Promote regional dialogue with a view to revitalising and strengthening the institutions of the Inter-American system, taking into account the new political, economic, social and strategic-military factors in the Hemisphere and in its subregions. To that end, they will seek to expand further a climate of confidence and security among the States of the Hemisphere.**

### Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Since the Santiago Summit, the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security has met regularly to analyze and discuss the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) in the Americas. Canada supports activities related to CSBMs as well as the work of the Committee on Hemispheric Security. The promotion of CSBMs in the Inter-American system is one of Canada's main priorities.

The OAS Web site (www.oas.org/csh/english/default.htm) was linked to the Committee on Hemispheric Security Web page to highlight human security issues and share information on anti-personnel mines, conventional weapons acquisitions, CSBMs, major multilateral military exercises, defence policy and doctrine, resolutions and documents of regional and sub-regional bodies, and notifications of meetings of these bodies. The Web page will be further expanded in the coming years to incorporate all components relating to questions of security among states. Canada strongly supports OAS efforts to continuously update the Committee on Hemispheric Security Web page, an important information tool aimed at keeping the broader public informed.

At the Windsor (Canada) OAS General Assembly, Canada played a key role in the development of the Education for Peace resolution, which facilitates the exchange of information on various training programs throughout the Americas. The OAS Program of Education for Peace in the Hemisphere is based on the recognition that education is one of the pillars on which to build peace, prevent conflict and reduce violence. It seeks to foster a process for developing among the population values, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour conducive to a stronger democratic political culture and a culture of peace.

Canada continues to participate actively in the defence ministerials of the Americas process — an important CSBM in and of itself. Canada also sends military personnel to the OAS Inter-American Defence College in Washington, D.C. (United States) to promote the exchange of views on security issues between members of the various armed forces of the Americas.

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**Carry out, in the manner in which they are set forth, the measures and recommendations resulting from the regional conferences on confidence and security building measures, held in November 1995, in Santiago (Chile) and in February 1998, in San Salvador (El Salvador) under the auspices of the Organisation of American States.**

The OAS has requested the Inter-American Defence Board, a body of the OAS mandated to ensure hemispheric security throughout the Americas, to prepare an annual report on security building measures to be undertaken by member states as follow-up to related conferences, and to provide a basis for developing new measures specifically tailored to individual circumstances. The implementation of such measures is an integral and routine element of defence and security interaction in the region. Canada submits reports on CSBMs regularly in the spring of each year.

**Department of National Defence**

In Canada, the Department of National Defence Web site incorporates much information on policy, planning and financing that would have been deemed classified in previous years. The site underlines the Government of Canada's commitment to promote transparency. Through its Military Training Assistance Plan, Canada has provided training in several OAS countries to promote confidence and mutual understanding among armed forces personnel. Also, for many years Canada has published defence "white papers" clearly stating Canada's defence and security aims and policies.

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**Continue to support the efforts of small-island States to address their special security concerns, which are multidimensional in nature, and economic, financial, and environmental matters, taking into account the vulnerability and level of development of these States.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

Discussions on the special security concerns of small island States are routinely integrated into broader security policy discussions at the Organization of American States. The work done by the OAS in highlighting this issue has resulted in this subject being taken up in other forums, including previous meetings of the defence ministers of the Americas in Cartagena (Colombia) in 1998 and Manaus (Brazil) in 2000. Ministers of Defence recognized the concerns of small-island States at the Cartagena and Manaus meetings.

In February 2000, the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security held a meeting to discuss the special security concerns of small island States. At the meeting, Canada underlined the link between globalization and security concerns, particularly as they relate to economy-related threats and destabilizing social consequences. Canada has taken a lead role in working more closely with its hemispheric partners to ensure that progress is made in addressing the concerns of small island States as it prepares to host the April 2001 Summit of the Americas.

As part of this process, Canada attended a preparatory seminar with Caribbean Community (CARICOM) members in September 2000 in Barbados. Discussions centred on Caribbean concerns about the Quebec Summit and explored the possibility of including illegal trafficking in small arms, money laundering, and natural and environmental disasters in the 2001 Plan of Action. Canada has also helped the region's small island States place their concerns on the hemispheric agenda by facilitating these countries' participation in the defence ministerials of the Americas process through the provision of air transportation.

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**In furtherance of efforts to transform the Western Hemisphere into an antipersonnel mine-free zone, and in recognition of the contribution in this regard of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, including its early entrance into force, they will encourage actions and support international humanitarian de-mining efforts in this area, with the goal of ensuring that priority is given to mines that threaten civilians and of ensuring that land can be restored for productive purpose. The latter will take place through effective regional and international cooperation and coordination, as requested by the affected States, to survey, mark, map, and remove mines; effective mine awareness for the civilian population and assistance to victims; and development and deployment of new mine detection and clearance technologies, as appropriate.**

Canada was the driving force behind the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, which entered into force in March 1999. As of January 1, 2001, the Convention (also referred to as the Ottawa Convention) had been signed by 137 countries and ratified by 110. Two-thirds of the world's nations have adopted the decision to ban anti-personnel mines. In the Americas, 33 states have signed and 27 have ratified the Convention. The speed with which the Convention became international law — it had one of the fastest entries into force of any multilateral treaty — demonstrates the strong political commitment to a global ban on anti-personnel mines. The Convention has established a new international norm against the use of these weapons.

In addition to being the first country to sign and ratify the Convention in December 1997, Canada was one of the first to fully comply with its obligations under the Convention. Canada has completed its stockpile destruction and is complying with its obligations to provide mine-affected states with the necessary assistance to meet their obligations under the Convention.

At the Second Meeting of States Parties in September 2000 in Geneva (Switzerland), Canada focussed its efforts on the speedy ratification and effective implementation of the Ottawa Convention. Emphasis was placed on making the Americas the first mine-free Hemisphere. In keeping with this goal, and in preparation for the Third Meeting of States Parties to take place in Managua (Nicaragua) in September 2001, a challenge was issued to all member states of the Americas. The Managua Challenge consists of three challenges issued to the signatory states of the Americas:

- to all states that have not yet ratified the Convention , to join the 27 states of the Americas that have completed the ratification process and to do so in time for the Managua meeting;

– to have all of their Article 7 reports commented on in time for the Managua meeting; and

– to arrive in Managua with their stockpiles completely destroyed.

Canada has designated the Americas as a top priority for the Canadian Landmine Fund, established in 1997 to support to support global action. It has also undertaken to ensure that the Hemisphere succeeds in implementing the Convention, that the needs of mine-affected states are met and that resources are mobilized for mine action. The Government of Canada's main objective in the Hemisphere is to help countries meet their goal of a mine-free zone.

Victim assistance programs in the region are helping to meet the immediate and long-term needs of landmine victims, from initial emergency treatment to social and economic rehabilitation. Canada's contributions to these programs are helping landmine survivors to rebuild their lives and communities. Examples of assistance include:

– in Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador, the Pan American Heath Organization Rehabilitation Program has supported a rural community-based physical and socio-economic rehabilitation program. Queen's University's International Centre for the Advancement of Community Based Rehabilitation (ICACBR) is responsible for the development, management and implementation of the Canadian contribution to this project;

– in Guatemala, the Community Based Rehabilitation and Economic Development Program is a co-operative effort of Canada and Israel, focussing on community rehabilitation for mine victims, including development of micro-enterprises. The ICACBR is the Canadian partner and the Development Study Centre of Rehevot is the Israeli partner;

– in El Salvador, Canada is supporting the Healing Ourselves, Healing the Land project. Co-ordinated by the Sierra Club of British Columbia and local partners, the project provides skills training to landmine victims in the development of appropriate technologies that will benefit both individuals and the environment. The project includes a small loans and local alternatives economic trading system that will help to ensure long-term sustainable income generation for landmine victims; and

– in Nicaragua, Canada supports the Creating New Energy, Building the Future project, sponsored by the Falls Brook Centre of New Brunswick. The project provides skills training for landmine survivors to produce alternative energy sources such as solar power, mine awareness workshops and donations of used prosthetics to a rehabilitation centre.

Clearing mined land and making it safe and productive are fundamental to addressing the humanitarian needs of people living in mined areas. Community-oriented, impact-based models of mine clearance programs are supported by Canada in efforts to build the capacity of local partners to clear priority land. Examples include:

– in Nicaragua, Canada and Norway are funding a two-year OAS de-mining program on the northern Honduran border;

– Canada supported an OAS assessment mission to Central America to evaluate the damage inflicted by Hurricane Mitch on regional mine action plans and programs;

– in Honduras, Canada has contributed funding to the final OAS de-mining module. Once this module is terminated, Honduras will be declared mine-free. Canada has also financed the purchase of shelters and related equipment for the OAS de-mining teams in Honduras;

– Canada is helping Ecuador and Peru to meet their mine action obligations under the 1998 Peace Treaty, the first in the history of the Hemisphere to include mine action as one of its activities. Canada has supported de-mining efforts with the provision of protective gear, clearance equipment and technical advice. In 1999, Canada set up a fund at the OAS Unit for the Promotion of Democracy to assist with de-mining efforts along the Ecuador-Peru border; Canada replenished the fund in 2000; and

– in Argentina, Canada supported a de-mining seminar for military personnel from around the world. An instructor from Canada's Department of National Defence was sent to teach a de-mining course at a regional de-mining centre in Buenos Aires.

Canada supports mine awareness programs that help people living in affected areas change behaviour leading to dangerous mine accidents. These programs engage people in learning about the dangers of mines, using educational techniques appropriate to culture, literacy levels and other factors. Mine awareness programs also help people to identify where mines are laid, thus aiding mine clearance efforts. In Colombia, for instance, Canada is collaborating with the UN Children's Fund and the Colombian Ministry of Communications on a mine awareness project to prevent injuries and deaths caused by landmines among residents of affected communities. The project also promotes rehabilitation and equality of opportunity for mine victims.

The destruction of stockpiled mines is also key to preventing the spread of mines, but it is a technically complex task. Canada offers technical support to help signatories to the Ottawa Convention to meet their obligations to destroy stockpiled mines:

– in Honduras and Nicaragua, Canada has responded to OAS requests for technical assistance in destroying stockpiled mines. A Canadian delegation was sent to the region in early 2000 to assist in destroying mines and provide training to ensure that stockpiled mines are destroyed safely and efficiently. In November 2000, Canada certified, along with other members of the international community, Honduras' final destruction of anti-personnel mines;

– in Argentina, Canada co-hosted (with Argentina, the OAS and the UN Regional Disarmament Centre in Lima) a seminar on stockpile destruction. The seminar, held in November 2000, sought to facilitate the goal of a landmine-free zone in the Western Hemisphere and compliance with the Ottawa Convention. It provided a regional forum to discuss stockpile destruction as well as examine best practices and lessons learned in destroying landmines; and

– Canada, in co-operation with the OAS, spearheaded the Managua Challenge Fund, which will help member states to meet the Managua Challenge and to arrive in September 2001 in Nicaragua for the Third Meeting of States Parties with all stockpiles destroyed.

As the struggle shifts from the achievement of a comprehensive ban on landmines to implementing the Ottawa Convention, maintaining public support remains crucial. Canada supports efforts to universalize the Convention and raise global awareness of its importance in the process of eliminating landmines. In Mexico, a regional seminar on anti-personnel mines was co-hosted by Canada and Mexico in early 1999. Attracting some 200 representatives from OAS governments, civil society and key donor countries, it helped advance the mine action agenda in the Americas, focussing on mine clearance and victim assistance, as well as universalization and implementation of the Ottawa Convention.

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**Continue promoting transparency in matters related to defence policy, among other aspects, with regard to modernising the Armed Forces, comparing military expenditure in the Region, and strengthening the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.**

The United Nations Arms Register was established in the wake of the Persian Gulf War and remains the only global co-operative security instrument with a mandate to deal with the challenges related to the proliferation of conventional arms. UN member states voluntarily submit annual data to the Register on their imports and exports of conventional weapons systems in seven defined categories. Several countries, including Canada, also traditionally circulate additional information, as provided to the UN, on procurement from national production and on national military holdings. The transparency that the provision of these data affords, with regard to the transfer of major conventional weapons systems among states, acts as an important confidence-building measure both globally and regionally. Its goal is to alert governments to potentially excessive and destabilizing transfers of conventional arms, to prevent arms acquisition by states due to uncertainty over the nature and extent of the arms trade, and to encourage restraint on the part of both supplier and recipient states.

Canada has strongly supported efforts to improve the usefulness of the Register by encouraging member countries to provide their data to regional organizations, and for several years, OAS member states have voluntarily shared data on exports and imports of conventional weapons, as reported to the Register.

The Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions was approved and opened for signature by the OAS General Assembly in June 1999. The Convention is the product of analysis and discussion of relevant data in regional forums, including in special sessions devoted to the UN Arms Register. Canada has signed and ratified the Convention; 18 other members of the OAS have signed the Convention but not yet ratified it.

The Convention requires that states parties report annually on their imports and exports of conventional weapons during the preceding calendar year. Information is to be received no later than June 15 of each year. The Convention also enhances existing practice regarding the circulation of data on transfers, by requiring reports on the entry into service of any imported conventional weapons with the armed forces of the country concerned within 90 days. It also makes mandatory 1) the provision of information on weapons acquisition through national production within 90 days of the incorporation of such weapons into the inventory of a state's armed forces, and 2) the reporting of a national funding commitment for conventional weapons to be incorporated into a state's inventory in the upcoming budget year. The Convention establishes a regional registry that will serve to further hemispheric efforts to enhance confidence- and security-building measures.

The promotion of transparency in matters related to defence policy is supported through the Canadian Department of National Defence Web site (www.dnd.ca), which regularly posts policy documents, military budgets and information on Canadian military procurement activities. This site demonstrates the high degree of transparency that Canada has deemed appropriate, and has generated considerable interest among other military organizations in the region.

### Increase cooperation with United Nations peacekeeping efforts.

The provision of military and civilian police and experts to UN peacekeeping efforts by OAS member states has been on the rise since the 1998 Summit of the Americas. Also, a number of new peacekeeping training centres have opened in the region over the past several years.

Canada promotes regional peacekeeping training through its Military Training Assistance Program. Training under this program takes place through such institutions as the Canadian Forces Peace Support Training Centre and through military staff colleges.

In June 1998, Canada sponsored a peacekeeping training course in Argentina for 10 South American countries. Canada also sent experts to peacekeeping consultations held in Chile in May 2000. Canada has provided training to UN military observers from Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia. In addition, the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre in Clements Port, Nova Scotia (Canada) will deliver training on peacekeeping issues to hemispheric partners in early 2001 through the Inter-American Defence College (IADC). Canada will also host delegates to the IADC in the first half of 2001 so that they can gain insight into Canada's social, economic, political and military fabric.

There is an increasing recognition in the region not only that peacekeeping provides a useful venue for the application of military skills, but also that interaction among military personnel of different countries is a valuable way to promote co-operation and shared values between militaries. Canada is an active promoter of peacekeeping training, having jointly sponsored peacekeeping training in the region and provided preparatory peacekeeping training for military, police and civilian personnel.

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**Encourage the development of cooperative programs to deal with natural disasters and humanitarian search and rescue operations.**

### Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and Canadian International Development Agency

In its October 1999 Speech from the Throne, the Government of Canada identified natural disasters as a component of human security. To strengthen Canada's international disaster response capacity, as well as its ability to communicate positive messages about Canadian assistance, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has developed standard operating procedures for more co-ordinated, effective and rapid government responses to disasters. The procedures draw on lessons learned from recent disasters such as hurricanes Mitch and Georges. Canada is now exploring other means of further enhancing the country's international disaster response capacity, such as the creation of stand-by resources and expertise, providing training on disaster management to diplomats posted abroad, and providing general public information campaigns to raise awareness on how best to respond to disaster-affected populations.

As part of its international humanitarian assistance program, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has created a dedicated Emergency Response Unit to ensure that its assistance to countries is appropriate, timely and effective. The role of this unit is to co-ordinate Canada's humanitarian assistance, participate in needs assessment missions and deliver relief supplies, if required.

Through CIDA, Canada has provided emergency humanitarian aid to help victims of many disasters in the Americas, including victims of Hurricane Lenny ($275 000), Hurricane Floyd ($110 000), Hurricane Georges ($650 000) and Hurricane Mitch (over $5 million). This assistance was provided through various partners including World Vision, the Canadian Centre for International Studies and Co-operation, and the Co-operative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) Canada. Canada also provided $275 000 in humanitarian aid to assist victims of the floods in Venezuela. This was channelled through the Pan American Health Organization, the International Federation of the Red Cross and the local Canada Fund in Caracas. Canada also provided $50 000 to the Canadian Red Cross to support the relief operations of the Mexican Red Cross for the victims of the October 1999 floods. This assistance helped the populations affected by these natural disasters by offering medical supplies, water, shelter and clothing, for example. More recently, Canada provided a total of $2.3 million in humanitarian assistance to victims of the earthquake in El Salvador in January 2001. Included in this amount were two Canadian Air Force cargo planes of emergency supplies, $350 000 channelled through the International Federation of the Red Cross and the Pan American Health

Organization, and $1 million administered through the Canadian development program in San Salvador and used by local NGOs to help with continuing emergency efforts.

Recognizing that there is a need to further strengthen early warning systems and disaster preparedness at the national and regional levels, Canada will continue to support regional disaster management initiatives. The Government of Canada will also promote natural disaster preparedness, mitigation and response activities through its bilateral programs and continue to support regional disaster management initiatives, such as those undertaken by the Pan American Health Organization.

The 1999 OAS General Assembly adopted a resolution that called for the establishment of the Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction (IACNDR) as the principal forum at the OAS for matters relating to natural disasters. At the General Assembly in 2000, Canada supported a resolution instructing the OAS Secretary General to continue to support the activities of the IACNDR through securing the necessary resources to fund the Committee and ensuring greater preparedness and reducing vulnerability to natural disasters within the Hemisphere. Canada is an active member of the IACNDR working group on preparedness and response.

The Canadian Air Force has been active in the Americas in providing expertise and training on how to deal with natural disasters and search and rescue (SAR). On this front, the Government of Canada has trained Chilean Air Force personnel in SAR techniques through Canada's Search Master Course at the Canadian Forces Base in Trenton, Ontario. This is an ongoing program, which was prompted by the Chilean Air Force's willingness to expand its SAR operations from strictly combat SAR operations to a more civilian-oriented approach like that of the Canadian Air Force (which focusses on rescuing civilians rather than persons involved in combat or other military operations). Chileans have also been observers at Canadian regional rescue co-ordination centres to learn how to establish similar operations at their own rescue co-ordination centres in Chile. In addition, Canada has invited South American military personnel to observe SAR exercises hosted by Canada, and Canada has been invited to participate in South American SAR exercises.

The Canadian Air Force attends the System of Co-operation Amongst the Air Forces of the Americas (SICOFAA) annual search and rescue conference. The forum is used to exchange ideas about SAR and about assistance to civil powers during natural disasters. Under this organization, the Canadian Air Force has helped put together a form that countries of the Americas can use to request assistance from neighbouring or other SICOFAA member countries in the case of natural disasters.

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**Pledge their efforts to ensure that the peaceful resolution of pending conflicts and disputes is achieved through existing mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes within the Inter-American System and in keeping with international law and treaties in force, and express that said mechanisms and instruments should be strengthened.**

Canada supported the development of a Fund for Peace to provide the OAS with resources to assist member states in the peaceful resolution of issues such as border disputes. Guidelines for the operation of the Fund, which was formally adopted by member states at the Windsor (Canada) OAS General Assembly in June 2000, are currently being developed and are expected to be completed in 2001. Canada is evaluating its capacity to contribute to the Fund.

In December 1999, the OAS Permanent Council, reacting to a dispute over a maritime boundary between Nicaragua and Honduras, adopted a resolution entitled Support for the Governments of Honduras and Nicaragua. In accordance with this resolution, OAS Secretary General César Gaviria appointed a special representative to travel to the two countries in an effort to ease tensions. Canada contributed $20 000 to defraying costs associated with the special representative's mission, which resulted in a series of agreements between the two countries. In a memorandum of understanding signed in March 2000, Honduras and Nicaragua agreed to normalize relations and jointly undertake confidence- and security-building measures aimed at preventing the outbreak of violence while the dispute awaits settlement by the International Court of Justice.

Canada is an active participant in the Conference of the American Armies (CAA), which meets every two years. The conferences enable participating countries to discuss hemispheric issues of importance. For example, at the 23rd CAA held in 1999 in La Paz (Bolivia), participating countries examined ways in which logistical support could be provided in international peacekeeping operations.

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**Acknowledge the value of ministerial or high-level meetings on the topics of international defence and security, such as the Defence Ministerials of Williamsburg, Bariloche, Cartagena, [and Manaus] as an important contribution to regional dialogue on these matters, and, in this context, encourage interested countries to hold other meetings.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

The Organization of American States joined Canada and others at meetings of defence ministers of the Americas (DMA) in Cartagena (Colombia) in 1998 and Manaus (Brazil) in 2000. OAS participation at these meetings helped ensure greater dialogue on confidence and security concerns in the region.

Canada strongly supports an OAS presence at DMA meetings, including the participation of the chair of the Committee on Hemispheric Security. Canada provided transportation to the Cartagena and Manaus DMA meetings for OAS representatives and, as previously noted, for ministers of small island states who might have otherwise found it difficult to attend.

The Manaus meeting pursued a progressive agenda, with emphasis shared between traditional security issues, such as combatting drug trafficking and terrorism, and broader concerns including civil-military relations and human rights. The meeting illustrated the broadening of the definition of security now used in the region, which now encompasses broader human security concerns.

**Entrust the OAS, through the Committee on the Hemispheric Security, to:**

- **follow up on and expand topics relating to confidence and security building measures;**
- **analyse the meaning, scope, and implications of international security concepts in the Hemisphere, with a view to developing the most appropriate common approaches by which to manage their various aspects, including disarmament and arms control;**
- **pinpoint ways to revitalise and strengthen the institutions of the Inter-American system related to the various aspects of Hemispheric Security;**
- **this process will culminate in a Special Conference on Security, within the framework of the OAS, to be held, at the latest, at the beginning of the next decade;**
- **support the convening of a follow-up Regional Conference to the Santiago and San Salvador Regional Conferences on Confidence and Security Building Measures, to further build mutual confidence in the Americas; and**
- **the progress achieved in these matters will be reported to States, thereby ensuring appropriate follow-up through the OAS, so that these topics may be discussed at the next Summit of the Americas.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

Since the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas, the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security has held annual meetings to follow up on confidence- and security-building measures. In March 2000, there was a special Committee meeting of parliamentarians from the Hemisphere to discuss these measures. The meeting was useful in reaching out to legislators regarding the importance of building confidence and security in the Hemisphere.

In response to an interest in developing appropriate common approaches for managing confidence- and security-building measures, a resolution was made at the Windsor (Canada) OAS General Assembly that called for more substantive work on the Declaration on Small Arms and Light Weapons complement to the existing OAS firearms convention. Canada strongly supported this resolution, which proposes to focus on excessive and destabilizing accumulation as well as on mechanisms for responsible government transfers of small arms and light weapons. Canada has tabled a draft OAS Declaration on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Committee on Hemispheric Security.

As part of the summit-mandated review of the hemispheric security system, being undertaken by the Committee on Hemispheric Security, Canada tabled a detailed proposal for a possible hemispheric security framework. The proposal builds on Canada's earlier *Food for Thought* paper designed to stimulate discussion on the scope and eventual outcome of the review conducted in the spring of 1999.

At a public meeting held in April 1999, members of civil society were given an opportunity to provide their views on hemispheric security by exploring the notion of security in the new millennium, discussing regional experiences and considering the reform of security institutions in the Americas.

The Committee on Hemispheric Security has begun reflecting on the review and will hold special meetings to further define the shape of a future hemispheric security system. Canada will continue to play an active role in this process over the coming months. At the Third Summit of the Americas in Quebec City (Canada), countries will report on progress achieved in the hemispheric security review, with the goal of concluding work by mid-2003.

## STRENGTHENING JUSTICE SYSTEMS AND JUDICIARIES

At the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas, leaders agreed to strengthen justice systems and judiciaries.

Canada is a constitutional democracy governed by the rule of law. The Canadian Constitution provides for the division of powers among levels of government and guarantees the sovereignty of Parliament, subject to the limitations expressed in various constitutional instruments, including the *Constitution Act of 1867, the Constitution Act* of 1982 and any constitutional conventions that have developed over time. The Constitution also ensures an independent judiciary that can act as the final guardian and interpreter of laws. The Constitution of Canada is the supreme law of Canada, and any law that is inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution is, to the extent of the inconsistency, of no force or effect.

Constitutional authority for the judicial system in Canada is divided between the federal and provincial/territorial governments. The provinces/territories have explicit jurisdiction over the administration of justice in the provinces/territories; this includes the constitution, organization and maintenance of the provincial courts, both civil and criminal, and civil procedure in those courts.

The federal government, on the other hand, has the exclusive authority to appoint and pay the judges of the superior courts in the provinces. Parliament also has the authority to establish a general court of appeal and courts for the better administration of the laws of Canada; it has used this authority to create the Supreme Court of Canada, the Federal Court and the Tax Court. In addition, Parliament has, as part of its criminal law power, exclusive authority over procedure in courts of criminal jurisdiction. Federal authority for criminal law and procedure ensures fair and consistent treatment of criminal behaviour across the country.

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**Develop mechanisms that permit easy and timely access to justice by all persons, with particular reference to persons with low income, by adopting measures to enhance the transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the courts. In this context, they will promote, develop and integrate the use of alternative methods of conflict resolution in the justice system.**

**Department of Justice Canada**

In Canada, there are several mechanisms to permit easy and timely access to justice. Among these are the Legal Aid Program, the Native Court Worker Program and the Public Legal Education and Information Program.

Legal aid is a critical component of the Canadian justice system. In criminal cases, legal aid is related to a number of fundamental rights including the right to a fair and impartial hearing. Support of these rights has generally fallen to legal aid programs for individuals who cannot afford counsel from their own financial resources. In Canada, the responsibility for the provision of criminal legal aid is divided between the federal government under its constitutional authority in matters of criminal law and the provincial/territorial governments under their constitutional authority for the administration of justice.

Since the early 1970s, the Government of Canada, represented by the Department of Justice Canada, has shared with the provinces/territories the costs of the provincially/territorially run criminal legal aid programs. The current criminal legal aid agreements, which provide for an annual federal contribution of $81.9 million, help provinces/territories to fund the ongoing costs arising from the provision of legal aid services in cases that meet the minimum national standard of risk of incarceration.

The Native Court Worker Program is a national justice program available to all Aboriginal Canadians. It facilitates and enhances access to justice by helping Aboriginal people in conflict with the criminal justice system to obtain fair, just, equitable and culturally sensitive treatment. For more than 30 years, Native court workers have provided counselling (other than legal) to adults and youths charged with committing criminal offences, and have helped them obtain legal assistance. Court workers also help those responsible for administering the criminal justice system to understand and appreciate the cultures and socio-economic conditions of Aboriginal people. In addition, over the last few years, court workers have provided assistance for emerging alternatives to criminal justice in Aboriginal communities. The Program's costs are shared by the federal, provincial and territorial governments.

The Public Legal Education and Information (PLEI) Program contributes to increased public confidence and trust in the justice system. Through this program, the Department of Justice helps citizens become legally literate and able to participate in the justice system. It is generally aimed at those who are at a disadvantage in accessing the justice system. The major activities of the program involve the provision of annual funding to PLEI organizations designated by each jurisdiction, usually in conjunction with support from provincial/territorial governments and law foundations. These organizations are part of a broader network of PLEI organizations. The provision of PLEI in Canada is an ongoing, collaborative effort between the designated organizations, their networks and the Department of Justice in order to address the real needs of people more directly and customize products to local circumstances.

In 1996, the Department of Justice adopted its Dispute Resolution (DR) Policy. The mandate of Dispute Resolution Services is to promote, encourage and implement DR mechanisms, other than litigation, in the federal government (e.g., conciliation, mediation, arbitration). DR Services provides legal advice within the Department of Justice and to all other federal departments and agencies. DR Services is also involved in developing government policies and programs to support the increased and informed use of DR at the federal level. To improve knowledge of this area, DR Services prepares general and technical information documents and increases awareness among departments and agencies, NGOs and the public about the advantages and disadvantages of DR mechanisms.

### Canadian International Development Agency

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is currently implementing a $750 000 project with the Administration of Justice Centre in Santa Eulalia (Guatemala) to support the establishment of a local justice centre in an ex-conflict zone. Through the UN Verification Mission in Guatemala, CIDA supports the provision of court, police and public defender services, Indigenous language interpreters and alternative conflict resolution approaches.

A $7-million social conflict and legal reform project supported by CIDA in Jamaica seeks to develop the capacity of the public and the legal-judicial system to resolve disputes. The project will be targeted at both the legal-judicial system and specific urban communities within Jamaica. Within the legal-judicial system, it will develop the capacity for the expedient, fair and transparent resolution of disputes. In two pilot communities, the project will work to foster collaboration between the various social services agencies on dispute resolution issues.

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**Strengthen, as appropriate, systems of criminal justice founded on the independence of the judiciary and the effectiveness of public prosecutors and defence counsels, recognising the special importance of the introduction of oral proceedings in those countries that consider it necessary to implement this reform.**

### Department of Justice Canada

In Canada, the independence of the judiciary is a constitutional and legal principle of foremost importance. This principle has received recognition in Canada's constitution and has continued to be developed and strengthened in Canada's statutes.

The courts in Canada consider the right to counsel as part of the right to a full answer and defence. The courts appoint counsel in the following circumstances: where accused persons cannot effectively defend the charges against them, either because of their own lack of ability or because of the complex nature of the charges; or where the offences are serious and there is a risk of a jail sentence in case of a conviction.

Each case is considered on its own facts. The criteria, examined by the courts in determining whether counsel should be appointed, include the financial circumstances of the accused, whether legal aid is available, the language skills and education of the accused, whether the case is likely to be lengthy or complex, in terms of the facts or the nature of the evidence, and whether there is a significant risk of jail if the accused is convicted.

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**Step up efforts to combat organised crime, and transnational crime, and, if necessary, foster new laws and international conventions, as well as procedures and mechanisms for continuing to combat these scourges.**

Effective April 1, 1997, the national Integrated Proceeds of Crime enforcement initiative established 10 new units across Canada in addition to the three units existing already. The initiative aims to intensify the investigation and prosecution of major organized criminals and crime groups operating in Canada. The units target profiteering from a whole range of enterprise crimes, including corruption crimes, in which organized criminals engage. The Integrated Proceeds of Crime units bring together representation from the Department of Justice Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, provincial/territorial and municipal police, and forensic accountants.

### Department of Justice Canada

The *Corruption of Foreign Public Officials Act* came into force in February 1999. It criminalizes bribing a foreign public official, as well as possession and laundering of property and proceeds obtained or derived from such bribery. These proceeds of crime can be seized, restrained or forfeited. Police may use a wiretap or other electronic surveillance to gather evidence in the investigation of these offences.

A completely revised *Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) Act* was passed in June 2000. The Act contains legislative provisions to facilitate combatting the laundering of proceeds of crime and to establish the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada. Part III of the Act is in force and the Centre — which would operate at arm's length from law enforcement authorities but be able to disclose some specific limited information — is under development. The Act creates a mandatory reporting system for suspicious financial transactions and for the cross-border movement of large amounts of currency.

Canada introduced legislation - the *Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act* - implementing the International Criminal Court Statute in Canadian law. The Act includes offences of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and breach of command responsibility. It also created new offences to protect the administration of justice of the International Criminal Court, as well as the safety of judges, officials and witnesses. Canada ratified the ICC Statute in July 2000. The *Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act* entered into force in October 2000.

### Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Canada participated actively in the negotiation of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols. Canada signed the Convention, the Protocol to Prevent, Punish and Suppress Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air in December 2000.

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**Adapt legislation and proceed, as soon as possible, with necessary institutional reforms and measures to guarantee the comprehensive protection of the rights of children and youths to meet the obligations established under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Ratified 1991) and other international instruments.**

### Department of Justice Canada

In Canada, when proposed federal legislation is reviewed by the Department of Justice Canada, the review includes consideration of whether the proposed legislation is consistent with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as other international human rights legislation.

### Canadian Heritage

Canadian Heritage promotes human rights, including the rights of children, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As part of its mandate, the Department, along with other government departments, has provided financial assistance to the Canadian Coalition on the Rights of Children for the development of a framework to monitor the implementation of the Convention in Canada. In 1994, Canadian Heritage, in co-operation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Canada, developed a training course for officials and groups responsible for programs and policies related to children and youth in Canada. The training program was offered to various government officials from Canadian Heritage, the Department of Justice Canada, Health Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. In 1997, Canadian Heritage also provided financial assistance to UNICEF Canada for the development of a training course for judges, lawyers and people working with children facing difficulties with the law.

### Department of Justice Canada

In 1997, the Government of Canada amended the *Criminal Code* to allow for the prosecution of persons engaged in child sex tourism. The amendment was made to allow for the Canadian prosecution of persons who engage in child sex tourism and to facilitate the apprehension and prosecution of persons who seek out the services of juvenile prostitutes in Canada. The legislation also included provision for a mandatory minimum sentence of five years imprisonment for any person living on the avails of prostitution in relation to a person under the age of 18 and who uses violence against that person and assists that person in carrying on prostitution-related activities for profit. In Canada, legislation came into force in 1993 to protect children from child pornography, sexual exploitation and harm.

In 1994, the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) database was enhanced to provide more and better information regarding sex offenders. CPIC, which is accessible to all police agencies in Canada, now includes data on all convicted sex offenders, prohibition orders and peace bonds relating to sex offenders, the age and sex of child victims of sexual abuse, and fingerprint information on persons accused of hybrid offences. Any organization that offers services to children and other vulnerable people can request that job applicants/volunteers obtain a CPIC criminal record check through their local police as a condition of employment or volunteer work.

In August 2000, the Government of Canada announced new legislation making the criminal records of pardoned sex offenders available for background checks. The legislation demonstrates the Government of Canada's commitment to protect children and other vulnerable groups. It thus enhances the capacity of police forces to thoroughly explore the criminal background of those who wish to work with children, including criminal records for designated sex offences where a pardon has been granted. This change also strengthens the sex offender screening system, based on CPIC, used by agencies and other groups who hire persons to work in positions of trust with children.

### Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Canada was the first country to sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts in June 2000 and was also the first to ratify it in July 2000. The aim of the Protocol is to raise the age for conscription and participation in hostilities to age 18. It calls on states parties to take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their national armed forces who have not reached the age of 18 do not take part in hostilities, and that youth under 18 are not compulsorily recruited into national armed forces. Amendments to the *National Defence Act* were introduced in June 2000 to entrench in legislation the Canadian Forces' existing policy, which precludes persons under the age of 18 from being deployed to hostile theatres of operations.

Canada also played an active role in negotiation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. In discussion with the provinces and territories, the Government of Canada is working toward signature and ratification of this optional protocol.

Through existing bilateral, regional and multilateral networks, Canada is an active player among a growing number of countries committed to war-affected children, and is working to mainstream this issue within the UN system, the OAS, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Organization of African Unity and the Economic Community of West African States.

Within the UN, Canada supports politically and financially the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict, as well as UN agencies, in particular UNICEF. Through its support for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Internally Displaced Persons, Canada is a strong advocate for the special needs of refugee and internally displaced children and adolescents. In the Security Council, Canada has identified the issue of war-affected children as a key element in initiatives to promote the protection of civilians and children in armed conflicts. Canada has strongly supported Security Council initiatives to incorporate the needs of children into peace support operations and peacekeeping training.

Canada hosted the International Conference on War-Affected Children in Winnipeg in September 2000. The objective of the Winnipeg Conference was to continue safeguarding the rights, welfare and protection of war-affected children and to map out a consolidated agenda for war-affected children to be taken to the UN Special Session on Children in 2001. The Conference examined the plight of refugee children, internally displaced children, children who have been sexually exploited or traumatized by armed conflict, and child soldiers, as well as the gender impacts of conflict.

The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction was ratified by Canada in 1983. The Convention provides for an expeditious remedy to obtain the return to the state of habitual residence of a child who has been unlawfully removed to or who is unlawfully retained in another country in breach of custody rights. Each state party is required to establish a central authority to deal with requests for the return of abducted children.

Canada actively participated in the negotiations of the Hague Convention on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Co-operation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children, which were finalized in 1996. Canada expects to implement this Convention in the near future.

The campaign entitled Our Missing Children is an internationally recognized federal program that assists police in the recovery and location of missing children in Canada and abroad.

#### Canadian International Development Agency

Through the Canadian International Development Agency, further support is provided to help war-affected children through projects focussed on the basic human needs (including needs for food, water, sanitation and health services) of children and their families; the rebuilding of physical infrastructure destroyed by conflict (including schools, hospitals and orphanages); family reunification and assistance for internally displaced and unaccompanied children; shelter and counselling services for children affected by war; the demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers; and landmines awareness campaigns.

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### Adopt as appropriate a clear distinction between procedures and consequences of violations of criminal law and measures established to protect children and youths whose rights are threatened or violated, and will promote social and educational measures to rehabilitate young offenders.

#### Department of Justice Canada

In Canada, young persons between the ages of 12 and 18 who are suspected of having committed a criminal offence are currently dealt with under the federal *Young Offenders Act*. The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees any person charged with an offence the right not to be arbitrarily detained or imprisoned; the presumption of innocence; and the right to a fair hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal. In addition to those rights, the *Young Offenders Act* provides youth with special guarantees given their state of dependency and level of development and maturity.

While the administration of youth justice rests with the provinces/territories, the Government of Canada shares the costs of legal aid services and a range of other services and programs for young persons dealt with under the *Young Offenders Act*.

In 1998, the Strategy for the Renewal of Youth Justice was announced. The Strategy includes a determined effort to encourage, through financial means and otherwise, the development of primary crime prevention programs. New legislation designed to replace the *Young Offenders Act* was introduced in 1999. As part of the Strategy, the new legislation would better distinguish between violent and non-violent offenders and provide appropriate measures to deal with both groups. The new law would strengthen efforts to rehabilitate young people who commit criminal offences and encourage the use of effective alternatives to courts and to custody. New funding arrangements have been negotiated with the provinces/territories to promote and support these policy directions.

The Department of Justice Canada has undertaken a review of child victims and the criminal justice system. A consultation paper, released in November 1999, examines the following areas for possible reform:

- creating further child-specific offences, such as child homicide and criminal neglect;
- strengthening the effectiveness of peace bonds in keeping abusers away from children;
- sentencing changes to improve protection for children from those who might re-offend; and
- facilitating children's testimony and providing for assistance to child witnesses, as well as issues relating to age, including raising the age of consent.

This review also includes working with the provinces/territories, which have responsibility for child protection, to facilitate the development of intersectoral and interdisciplinary approaches by social services, justice agencies and the health and educational sectors. The aim is to focus on prevention and strengthening the links between justice agencies and the early warning, investigation, prevention and enforcement stages of child protection.

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**Foster the establishment of specialised tribunals or courts for family matters, as appropriate, and in accordance with their respective legal systems.**

### Department of Justice Canada

In Canada, the federal and provincial/territorial governments have areas of exclusive and shared jurisdiction over family law matters. The federal government has exclusive jurisdiction over marriage and divorce. The provincial/territorial governments have exclusive jurisdiction over division of property, adoption, guardianship and child protection proceedings. The two levels of government share jurisdiction over matters of spousal and child support as well as custody and access.

Consequently, a litigant may need to appear before a federal court judge to obtain certain relief, and before a provincial court judge for other types of relief. This division of jurisdiction between superior and provincial courts can increase confusion, cost and delay for litigants, as well as prevent a single court from examining the totality of a particular family's issues.

In response to these concerns, the Unified Family Court (UFC) model was piloted with federal government support in a number of provinces. Unified family courts are composed of federally appointed judges who can hear matters of both provincial and federal jurisdiction. This enables family members to resolve legal issues in one single forum. Moreover, UFCs encourage conciliatory resolution by providing access to a range of court-annexed and community services. The success of the initial pilot projects led to a substantial expansion of the UFC concept in 1998, with the addition of 27 new UFC judges. Various forms of the UFC are currently found in seven jurisdictions: Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan. Many provinces are expressing interest in implementing or expanding the UFC concept.

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**Expedite the establishment of a justice studies centre of the Americas, which will facilitate training of justice sector personnel, the exchange of information and other forms of technical cooperation in the Hemisphere, in response to particular requirements of each country. To this end, they request the Ministers of Justice or other competent authorities to analyse and define the most suitable actions for the organisation and establishment for such a centre.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

Pursuant to mandates from the 1998 Santiago Summit and the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, the OAS Special Group on Justice — open to all member states — worked from May to September 1999 to draft the Statute of the Justice Studies Centre for the Americas (JSCA). Canada participated actively in the development of the statute, approved in a special session of the General Assembly in November 1999, thus helping to establish the JSCA. The objectives of the JSCA, according to its statute, are to facilitate the training of justice sector personnel; facilitate the exchange of information and other forms of technical co-operation; and support reform and modernization of justice systems in the region. The JSCA is responsible for comparative analysis and research and acts as a clearinghouse. The transitory provisions of the statute provide that, for its first phase, the JSCA shall develop topics related to criminal justice.

The seven-member board of directors for the JSCA was elected by the OAS Permanent Council in January 2000. Individuals were elected from Chile, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United States. At a meeting in Costa Rica in early March 2000, ministers of justice selected Santiago (Chile) as the site of the JSCA. In July, the board of directors met in Miami (United States) to choose an executive director for the JSCA: a Chilean representative was selected from the 20 eligible candidates. Approval of this decision by the Permanent Council enabled the Executive Director to take office and has allowed concrete action to begin on a work plan for the JSCA, in line with its statutory objectives. Canada is well placed to participate in the research, training and other projects undertaken by the JSCA, given its expertise in both common and civil law; the Government of Canada is confident that there will be a role for Canadian experts in the JSCA's activities over the months and years ahead. Canada will continue to actively monitor developments relating to the JSCA in order to ensure that it achieves the objectives set out for it in Santiago in 1998.

**Promote, in accordance with the legislation of each country, mutual legal and judicial assistance that is effective and responsive, particularly with respect to extraditions, requests for the delivery of documents and other evidentiary materials, and other bilateral or multilateral exchanges in this field, such as witness protection arrangements.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

Canada has extradition legislation and a network of extradition treaties. The *Extradition Act* was modernized in 1999 to create a uniform extradition procedure applicable to all requests for extradition, allow for the extradition of fugitives to an international criminal tribunal, provide procedural and human rights safeguards for the fugitive, and make the extradition process more accessible to countries that have rules of evidence that differ from those of Canada.

Canada can provide mutual assistance in criminal matters in response to requests put to Canada under bilateral/multilateral conventions or special arrangements, pursuant to the *Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Act*. The Act permits the use of compulsory measures to gather evidence in response to foreign requests for assistance. The legislation applies to all types of criminal offences.

While Canada does not have a reciprocal enforcement of criminal judgments law to permit the immediate enforcement of a foreign criminal confiscation order, it does have legislation creating a criminal offence for the possession of the proceeds of crime, including proceeds from foreign offences. It also has a broad money-laundering offence. The combined effect of these offences, together with the ability to seize and restrain property that may be forfeited as proceeds of crime, allows Canada to act upon a foreign state's request to investigate and prosecute offenders who move proceeds of crime into Canada or acquire Canadian property with their proceeds of crime acquired elsewhere. Canada acts upon foreign requests, undertakes a domestic prosecution and applies for forfeiture.

Canada is participating in the negotiation of a convention on jurisdiction and foreign judgments in civil and commercial matters at the Hague Conference on Private International Law, which should be finalized in early 2002. The convention will provide uniform rules for court use and will greatly simplify the recognition and enforcement of judgments among contracting states. It will apply to civil and commercial matters with certain exceptions that include questions of capacity, maintenance obligations, matrimonial regimes, custody and access, wills and succession, insolvency, social security, arbitration and admiralty. It is expected to cover the electronic commerce aspects of civil and commercial matters.

In addition, the Uniform Law Conference of Canada is preparing a *Uniform Enforcement of Foreign Judgments Act*. This model legislation aims to provide uniform rules in all Canadian jurisdictions for the recognition and enforcement in Canada of civil and commercial judgments from states that are not party to any relevant multilateral or bilateral convention in force for Canada.

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**Support the convening of periodic meetings of Ministers of Justice and Attorneys General of the Hemisphere within the framework of the Organisation of American States.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade**

The Second Meeting of Ministers of Justice and Attorneys General of the Americas took place in Lima (Peru) in March 1999. At the meeting, ministers discussed access to justice; training of judges, prosecutors and judicial officials; prison and penitentiary policy; and strengthening and developing inter-American co-operation. In a delegation headed by the Minister of Justice, Canada participated actively and later contributed to follow-up work done within the framework of the Special Group on Justice at the OAS in Washington, D.C. (United States). As noted earlier, Canada contributed to the creation of a statute for the Justice Studies Centre for the Americas, leading to the founding of the JSCA, which is a Summit mandate. Canada also participated in the Government Experts Group on Cyber Crime, which formulated 10 recommendations to be forwarded to the Third Meeting of Ministers of Justice.

The Third Meeting of Ministers of Justice took place in San José (Costa Rica) in 2000. Canada again participated actively in discussions that focussed on cyber crime, extradition and mutual legal assistance, access to justice, prison and penitentiary policy, and the JSCA. Ministers approved Santiago (Chile) as the site of the JSCA and welcomed its new seven-member board of directors, elected by the OAS Permanent Council in January 2000. Together with other member states, Canada endorsed the conclusions of the Government Experts Group on Cyber Crime, and urged that the recommendations be implemented within the framework of the OAS. Canadian leadership was especially evident in the area of mutual legal assistance. Ministers resolved to strengthen co-operation in both extradition and mutual legal assistance by establishing an information network composed of competent authorities, mandated to prepare specific recommendations for consideration at the next ministerial meeting. Canada volunteered to act as a co-ordinator on the subject of mutual legal assistance, and work has already begun to examine the possibility of an electronic network. Canadian officials will be working with their hemispheric partners in the months ahead to achieve concrete progress in this area. The Fourth Meeting of Ministers of Justice is slated to take place in Trinidad and Tobago in March 2001.

## MODERNIZATION OF THE STATE IN LABOUR MATTERS

At the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas, leaders agreed to modernize the state in labour matters. Canada is committed to implementing the Plan of Action mandates and has taken a number of steps to improve access to labour market opportunities, particularly for vulnerable groups. Some recent developments in this area are highlighted below.

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**Promote measures by their Ministries of Labour to provide high quality programs and assistance for workers and employers, placing emphasis on greater decentralisation of their functions, the incorporation of new technologies, active labour market policies, better and more timely information regarding the labour market, and improvement of safety and health conditions in the workplace.**

Under the Canadian Constitution, primary responsibility for the provision of social assistance (welfare) to persons in need belongs to the provinces and territories. All provinces/territories provide such benefits, in prescribed circumstances, to low-income individuals and families.

Social assistance (SA) programs throughout Canada underwent a major transformation during the 1990s. While there are significant differences among the provinces and territories, the broad approach to SA is generally consistent. The key change to social assistance programs has been a redefinition of the link between welfare and work, with an emphasis placed on measures to help individuals move from social assistance to the labour market. Governments have tightened the welfare rules, and in some cases reduced the rates, not only to reduce spending directly but also to ensure that social assistance recipients have incentives to obtain work.

Most Canadian jurisdictions require mandatory participation by employable clients in employment, training or education programs as a condition of eligibility for SA. The programs generally involve remedial education, or work in public or voluntary agencies in the community or in subsidized jobs with the private sector. In all Canadian jurisdictions, financial penalties may be imposed on those who do not participate, unless there are sound reasons why the individual is not available for employment (e.g., health problems or special child care responsibilities).

The new approach to social assistance is still evolving. Finding the right balance between emphasis on rapid return to the labour market and meeting the needs of some recipients for long-term income support or adjustment measures will continue to be a major challenge.

To respond to concerns regarding child poverty in Canada, federal, provincial and territorial governments worked together to develop a new integrated child benefit — the National Child Benefit (NCB). (Please see detailed information about the NCB later on in this chapter.) In addition to its anti-poverty objectives, the NCB incorporates active labour market measures. The NCB is increasing incentives for families to move from social assistance into the labour force. In the past, many families who relied on social assistance found it difficult to move out of the welfare system and into employment, as they were often worse off financially in low-paying jobs. The NCB was designed to make sure that families leaving social assistance are better off working. It is now easier for low-income parents to move into and stay in employment, as parents receive greater income support for their children outside the social assistance system, along with additional benefits and services provided through provincial reinvestment programs.

### Human Resources Development Canada

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) was created in 1993 to provide an integrated approach to Canada's national investment in people. Its mission is to enable Canadians to participate fully in the workplace and in the community. HRDC administers programs supporting the income of Canadians and human resources programs linked to the requirements of the national economy and labour market. Four of its program and activity areas are:

- Employment Insurance (EI)— helps unemployed Canadians get back to work by providing temporary financial assistance while they upgrade their skills or look for jobs and by delivering, in co-operation with the provinces/territories, active re-employment benefits and support measures;

– Human Resources Investment — helps the Government of Canada promote its employment, youth, learning and literacy agendas by enhancing Canadians' employability, helping unemployed people find and keep jobs, combatting child poverty and assisting those most in need. It also brings together (through sectoral councils) employers and workers, educators and governments to address, on a national basis, the human resources challenges facing a sector or industry;

– Income Security Programs — strengthens the income security of targeted groups of Canadians by developing, administering and delivering programs for seniors, persons with disabilities, survivors and migrants; and

– Labour Program — promotes a co-operative work environment that fosters constructive labour-management relations and encourages innovation, investment and worker well-being. It provides an array of programs and activities to equip Canadian workers and their employers with the tools they need to respond to emerging trends in the workplace and to adapt to the changing nature of work itself.

A well-functioning labour market, together with access to high-quality education and skills training, is the cornerstone for ensuring that Canadians can have good jobs in a competitive global environment. The primary responsibility for providing learning opportunities rests with the provincial/territorial governments, but the federal government has long played a major role in providing labour market information and adjustment measures to Canadian workers and employers.

Based on the offer made by the federal government to provinces and territories in 1996 ("Getting Canadians Back to Work"), a number of labour market development agreements have been signed with all Canadian jurisdictions, except Ontario. Four provinces and one territory (Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, British Columbia and Yukon) have entered into co-management agreements, under which they share priority setting and planning activities but HRDC continues to deliver Canada's employment benefits and support measures (EBSMs). Five provinces and two territories signed full transfer agreements (New Brunswick, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Northwest Territories and Nunavut) under which they assume responsibility for the design and delivery of programs and services that are similar to Canada's EBSMs. Money is transferred to transfer provinces/territories to fund these programs and services and their administration.

Starting in 1996, a series of labour market development agreements with the provinces/territories have been developed in the context of the Employment Insurance (EI) legislation. Under the agreements, provincial/territorial governments can assume greater responsibility for the design and delivery of active employment programs funded from the EI Account. Each province/territory, therefore, can work with the federal government to develop labour market arrangements tailored to its needs and priorities, and to take on full responsibility for designing and delivering services under its agreement.

For its part, the Government of Canada continues to be responsible for matters that are pan-Canadian in scope. It delivers income benefits to Canadians and retains legal responsibility for the disposition of EI contributions. It provides a national system of labour market information supporting employment measures and the interprovincial mobility of labour. It also develops interprovincial sectoral partnerships and strategies to respond to national economic adjustment needs. In addition, the federal government, primarily through HRDC, is responsible for approximately $1 billion in active labour market programming for Aboriginal people, youth and persons with disabilities.

Social assistance programs throughout Canada underwent a major transformation during the 1990s. While there are significant differences among the provinces and territories, the broad approach is generally consistent. The key is a redefinition of the link between welfare and work, with an emphasis placed on measures to help individuals to move from social assistance to the labour market. Governments have tightened the welfare rules and, in some cases, reduced the rates, not only to reduce spending directly but also to ensure that social assistance recipients have incentives to obtain work.

Short-term training and counselling programs designed to assist the transition from welfare to work are increasingly provided. The programs generally involve work in public or voluntary agencies in the community or in subsidized jobs with the private sector. In some instances, participation in these employment measures is mandatory unless there are sound reasons why the individual is not available for employment (e.g., health problems or special child care responsibilities). In a number of places, financial penalties may be imposed on those who do not participate.

The new approach to social assistance is still evolving. Finding the right balance between emphasizing a rapid return to the labour market and meeting the needs of some recipients for long-term income support or adjustment measures will continue to be a major challenge.

### Employment Insurance

Employment Insurance provides temporary income replacement for insured workers who become involuntarily unemployed. The Employment Insurance system was introduced in 1996 following the most comprehensive reform of the program in 25 years. As a result of the reforms, the program better responds to Canada's new economic and workplace realities. Under the new system, there is a stronger link between the amount of paid work done and the length of time the benefits can be received. The reforms were an effort to influence the work patterns of Canadians by improving incentives to work and reducing dependency on the system. The Family Supplement was introduced to provide a top-up to claimants in low-income families with children in recognition of their particular needs during periods of temporary unemployment.

The 1996 reform was accompanied by an increased emphasis on active measures to help Canadians get back to work. These active measures, or employment benefits and support measures, funded under Part II of the *Employment Insurance Act*, are designed to assist unemployed Canadians in preparing for and obtaining employment. Labour market development agreements provide a framework within which the EBSMs are delivered by the provinces/territories and tailored to local labour markets. The EBSMs are available to EI-eligible clients and those who have had EI claims that ended in the past three years, or began in the past five years for maternity/parental claims.

Effective December 31, 2000, EI maternity and parental leave has been extended from six months to one full year. The duration of parental benefits has been increased from 10 to 35 weeks for biological and adoptive parents. Maternity and sickness benefits will remain at 15 weeks each. A maximum of 50 weeks of combined maternity, parental and sickness benefits is available. Claimants require 600 hours of insured employment to receive maternity, parental or sickness benefits, down from 700 hours. Should parents choose to share the extended parental benefits, the parent filing the second claim will not be required to serve a second two-week waiting period. When parental benefits are shared, both parents can take a portion of the available parental benefits either at the same time, consecutively or even on alternating weeks. Parental benefits can be spread over time. The only limit is that they must be taken within 52 weeks of the child's birth or placement in the parents' care for adoption. While receiving parental benefits, parents will be able to earn the greater of $50 or 25 percent of their weekly benefit rate (maximum of $413) without a deduction from their EI benefits. Earnings will continue to be deducted from maternity and sickness benefits. Through the Family Supplement, claimants in low-income families with children can receive up to 80 percent of their insurable earnings during the time they are on maternity and parental leave.

Through its monitoring and assessment reports, Human Resources Development Canada continues to assess the impact of changes to the EI program on individuals, communities and the economy. By providing feedback on how EI interacts with the labour market and society, this process contributes to the continuing evolution of the program.

### Labour Market Information

Accurate and timely labour market and career information is a prerequisite if individuals and institutions are to make efficient choices about acquiring skills and finding jobs. Federal, provincial and territorial governments in Canada invest heavily in the development of such information products.

The most popular product by far is the Job Bank Web site, which has an average of 46 000 jobs advertised at any one time. It receives 28 million hits per year and is accessed by some eight million users through computerized kiosks, making it the Government of Canada's most widely used Web site. Job Bank is a partnership among federal, provincial and territorial governments. Its popularity is explained by user success in finding work through this tool. Of the 80 percent of users who have applied for jobs, 46 percent obtained interviews, 27 percent got job offers and 23 percent were hired. Many countries have shown interest in this product; currently, the approach is being successfully tested in Sao Paolo (Brazil).

## Labour Issues

Canada's Labour Program focusses on the workplace, changes affecting the workplace and the needs of employers and employees in Canada. It is responsible for developing, administering and enforcing legislation related to the federal jurisdiction workplace, including the *Canada Labour Code*, the *Employment Equity Act* and other legislation on wages, working conditions and compensation services for the Government of Canada.

One of the program's key responsibilities is to administer legislation affecting the working relationship between employers and employees involved in federally regulated activities. The *Canada Labour Code* governs federally regulated employers and employees in terms of industrial relations, occupational safety and health, and minimum labour standards and equal wages. The Code applies in a number of key infrastructure sectors including telecommunications and broadcasting; airports and airlines; interprovincial and international rail; road and marine transportation, ports and long-shoring; as well as banking and grain handling. The purpose of the *Employment Equity Act* is to achieve equality in the workplace and, in the pursuit of that goal, to eliminate barriers experienced by women, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and visible minorities. The purpose of employment equity measures is also to address issues of recruitment, retention and promotion among designated groups.

Canada's ability to compete internationally and provide secure, rewarding jobs domestically depends on highly productive workplaces. The key to creating such workplaces is in striking the right balance among the interests of employees, organized labour and employers in Canada. The Labour Program supports that objective by promoting a co-operative work environment that fosters constructive labour-management relations and encourages innovation, investment and employee well-being. Through its policies, technical advice and support services, the Program helps to promote workplaces that address emerging issues facing employers, organized labour and employees.

Through various offices across the country, the Labour Program provides a wide range of services to assist and support labour and management, including:

- provision of industrial relations dispute settlement assistance and preventive mediation programs;

- investigations of serious/fatal accidents, refusals to work, dangerous situations, group termination and unjust dismissals;

- complaint investigations, programmed inspections, permit investigations, technical surveys and safety audits in the areas of safety and health as well as labour standards;

- inspections, audits and on-site visits to monitor pay equity progress and support compliance with employment equity legislation and regulations;

- advice and assistance to employers, employees, committees and representatives of occupational safety and health and unions; and

– counselling and education, including promotional activities such as seminars, conventions and conferences.

Canada is committed to ensuring that Canadians work in a safe, healthy and fair environment. The Labour Program provides an array of programs and activities to equip employees and their employers with the skills they need to respond to emerging trends in the workplace and to adapt to the changing nature of work itself. It also develops and administers legislation regulating the conditions of work and ensures employer compliance.

Canada's Labour Program provides high-quality programs and assistance for workers and employers. In terms of operations, for example, one of the primary goals of the *Canada Labour Code* is to prevent workplace accidents and exposure to hazardous substances that could adversely affect employee health. Under the Program, labour affairs officers conduct workplace inspections and safety audits, respond to employee complaints and investigate accidents. Employees of the Operations Directorate work with prevention programs as well as safety and health committees locally, help develop safety procedures and offer education programs to help employers and employees make their work sites safer and healthier.

The *Canada Labour Code* provides for minimum standards with respect to holidays, maternity-related reassignment leave, maternity leave, parental leave, overtime, layoffs, severance pay, wages and sick leave. The Labour Program establishes and protects employees' rights through legislation governing labour standards for employees under federal jurisdiction. Wage recovery and payment orders, for example, are designed to ensure that employees receive any outstanding salary or benefits owing to them from their employer. Once a labour affairs officer determines that a complaint over non-payment of wages is founded, the officer has the power to issue an order to an employer or director to pay the amount due to an employee. Labour affairs officers in offices across Canada ensure that federal labour standards are upheld through a mix of inspections, investigations of complaints and promotional and informational activities.

Through the *Government Employees Compensation Act*, the Labour Program administers a compensation program that provides employment injury benefits to employees of the federal public service and most Crown agencies. This program is administered by the Workers' Compensation Boards in the provinces, pursuant to administrative agreements with the Minister of Labour. The Workers' Compensation Boards provide an array of compensation services across the country to all covered employers and workers, including claims adjudication, income replacement, medical services, rehabilitation, vocational training and return-to-work assistance. Initiatives are underway to improve the compensation program by focussing on better case management, closer links between safety performance and compensation costs, and improved return-to-work measures.

### Youth

Canada's Youth Employment Strategy, announced in 1997, supports 30 000 young Canadians in gaining work experience through community service projects. With a budget of $155 million a year, the Strategy also includes initiatives for youth facing barriers to employment; internships focussed on international trade and development, and science and technology; and initiatives targeting Aboriginal youth. The Strategy also provides summer work for 60 000 students. Of particular importance in these efforts is the provision of support to youth facing socio-economic barriers that put them at high risk of unemployment and social and economic exclusion.

Together, governments across Canada are addressing the priority of youth employment. At the meeting of federal, provincial and territorial ministers of labour in 1997, a four-point agenda was developed to improve access to education and skills; provide work opportunities for youth making the school-to-work transition and youth at risk; assist youth in adapting to an increasingly complex workplace; and address socio-cultural barriers to labour force participation.

Of particular importance in these efforts is the provision of support to youth facing multiple socio-economic barriers. These young people are at high risk of unemployment and sometimes of social and economic exclusion.

For example, Ontario's Rural Youth Strategy, introduced in 1998, is a four-year, $35-million program designed to meet the needs of young people, enhance the employment skills of rural youth and encourage a climate for job creation and opportunities for business in rural Ontario. The Strategy is investing in projects carried out by rural partnerships and alliances to improve the employability of youth aged 15 to 29 years.

### Persons with Disabilities

In 1996, persons with disabilities were identified by federal and provincial/territorial governments as a national priority for social policy renewal. The release in 1998 of *In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues* provided the first joint vision and policy framework aimed at promoting equity and inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of Canadian society. This framework focusses on promoting the full citizenship and inclusion of persons with disabilities through three key interrelated policy areas: employment, income and disability supports. Since that time, governments have agreed to continue work on the development of an accountability framework and the Internet information service, Disability Links.

The federal Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities initiative provides some $193 million per year to provinces/territories to help individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain and maintain employment. This flexible arrangement encourages the development of programs and services that reflect local priorities and meet the unique employment needs of persons with disabilities.

In addition, in 1997 the Government of Canada introduced the Opportunities Fund for persons with disabilities, and has increased grants for post-secondary education to better recognize disability-related costs.

### Gender Equality

The Federal Plan for Gender Equality, adopted in 1995, recognizes that the Government of Canada has a responsibility to respect and promote gender equality for employees of federal departments and agencies. This means ensuring that women employees benefit from conditions that will ensure their health, economic well-being, safety and equal role in governance. A specific goal of the Plan is to improve the presence of women in non-traditional public service occupations. It also outlined the government's commitment to creating supportive and flexible workplace environments.

#### Status of Women Canada

Through its Women's Program, Status of Women Canada has funded various initiatives to address the issue of women's unpaid work, including an awareness campaign and a strategy for the recognition of unpaid work as it relates to family allowances, parental insurance and work and family.

Since the Royal Commission on the Status of Women reported in 1970, governments in Canada have taken many steps to advance gender equality. Among the most important developments have been provisions in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act* and other legislation, both federal and provincial, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex. In the new millennium, efforts to achieve gender equality continue, particularly in such areas as helping women attain economic autonomy and well-being and providing security from violence. The aim is to enable women to become full and equal participants in the mainstream of Canadian society. To achieve this, Canada is committed to the principle of affirmative action, since equal measures do not always produce equal results.

Much emphasis has been placed in recent years on the development of gender analysis and gender equality indicators. Since 1995, the federal government has required that, wherever appropriate, future policies, programs and legislation be subjected to gender analysis, that is, to a review process intended to ascertain the differential impact on women and men. At the same time, work has been undertaken by federal and provincial/territorial ministers to develop with Statistics Canada a series of economic gender equality indicators. These cover the fields of income, work and learning and are intended to help understand economic reality for women and to serve as a basis for policy development in this field. In addition, studies have been conducted in fields of special relevance to women, such as unpaid work. Canada has been an international leader in this type of approach to gender issues.

Women head the majority of single-parent families, and even in two-parent families they typically assume a disproportionate share of the responsibility and the unpaid work. Compared with men, they are more likely to have part-time employment, earn less and be living in poverty. Measures to address these issues have been introduced by a number of Canadian governments in recent years, for example, the joint federal-provincial/territorial initiative to reduce child poverty.

Aboriginal women, many of whom live in poverty, face particular difficulties. The Government of Canada's action plan, *Gathering Strength*, outlines a number of measures that will have special significance for Aboriginal women, including welfare reforms focussing on economic development and job creation; an Aboriginal Human Resource Development Strategy; an Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative; and increased funding for housing, water and sewers on reserves.

### Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

#### Aboriginal People

Together with provincial and territorial governments, the Government of Canada is working with Aboriginal people to respond to their needs and aspirations. *Gathering Strength*, the government's response to the 1998 report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, reinforces the government's commitment to reconciliation and practical measures to improve the health and social conditions of Aboriginal people and to enhance their participation in Canadian society.

There is an urgency to the plan because, in spite of some improvements, social, economic and health indicators in Aboriginal communities are far below those of many other Canadians. In addition, the Aboriginal population growth rate is double that of the overall Canadian population. As a result, almost two-thirds of Aboriginal people are under 30, and about 35 percent of reserve residents are under 15. These factors are dramatically increasing demand for school space, housing, public infrastructure, social services and jobs.

New strategies have been adopted by the federal and provincial/territorial governments to address the needs of Aboriginal people in urban areas, promote development of economic enterprises, create appropriate human resources strategies and deal with health needs, for example. The most important common feature of these approaches is that they directly involve Aboriginal people.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada provides over $1 billion a year in social assistance to some 150 000 Aboriginal persons living on reserves. Provincial/territorial governments provide social assistance where required to the increasing numbers of Aboriginal persons living off-reserve. The Government of Canada spends a further $1 billion per year on water, sewers, roads and housing on reserves. The Department also covers the costs of education on reserves and pays for the post-secondary education of Aboriginal persons. Steps are also being taken by the Correctional Service of Canada to meet the serious problem of high levels of incarceration among Aboriginal people.

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**Give special attention to the incorporation of socially-disadvantaged groups into the workforce, including women, minorities, youth, the disabled and other vulnerable populations, and to the services offered by the Ministries of Labour that take into consideration their special needs. At the same time, Governments will further strengthen their overall efforts, and coordination among involved agencies, to address the issue of children at work. The Ministries of Labour will exchange experiences on best practices in these areas.**

## Human Resources Development Canada

Information on programming in support of youth, people with disabilities and Aboriginal Canadians is provided above.

### Labour program

Human Resources Development Canada's Labour Program efforts to ensure fairness in the workplace took an important step forward with the new *Employment Equity Act*, which came into force in October 1996. The purpose of the Act is to achieve equality in the workplace so that no person is denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability. Employers are required to correct the conditions of disadvantage experienced by women, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities. The Labour Program supports implementation of the *Employment Equity Act* and the Federal Contractors Program by:

- conducting research, collecting data and reporting on progress for the four designated groups (women, Aboriginal people, persons with a disability and members of a visible minority);

- developing and conducting information programs to foster public understanding;

- providing information to employers concerning their obligations and how they can comply;

- recognizing outstanding achievements by employers;

- undertaking compliance reviews of employers subject to the Federal Contractors Program;

- monitoring and evaluating all annual employment equity reports submitted by employers under the legislation; and

- producing an annual report on employment equity for Parliament.

In Canada, the Equal Pay Program is designed to eliminate gender-based wage discrimination and to assure equal pay for work of equal value. In terms of pay equity, the *Canadian Human Rights Act* states that it is a discriminatory practice to pay different wages to men and women performing work of equal value within the same establishment. Cases can be referred to the Canadian Human Rights Commission for investigation and resolution.

To date, visits by federal officials from HRDC have been made to over 1350 employers, ranging from large banks with up to 60 000 employees to very small transportation companies and radio stations with fewer than 10 employees. The purpose of these visits is to enforce the application of the Act and investigate complaints.

## Children and youth

Through all the efforts of governments in Canada to find better ways of applying finite resources to meet the social and economic needs of Canada's future, there has been broad consensus that investing in the next generation is a critical priority. Evidence indicates that early interventions are generally much more cost-effective in bringing about positive change than are later attempts at remediation. There are concerns that children and youth may face more difficult circumstances than in the past, and that their development is too often adversely affected by poverty, family instability and other problems. There are also concerns that many youth are not faring well in the transition to adulthood and independence, particularly with respect to their opportunities to gain work experience.

As a result, much attention has been paid by the federal and provincial/territorial levels of government to the well-being of children and youth, starting with healthy prenatal conditions and progressing through early childhood and compulsory schooling to post-secondary education, employment training and labour market entry.

### Children

#### *National Children's Agenda and Federal/Provincial/Territorial Initiative on Early Childhood Development*

Federal, provincial and territorial governments have collaborated in developing a shared vision for children, with input from national Aboriginal organizations. In May 1999, the vision paper *A National Children's Agenda: Developing a Shared Vision* was released, along with a supplementary paper, *A National Children's Agenda: Measuring Child Well-Being and Monitoring Progress.* The six areas proposed in the vision paper are enhancing early childhood development, supporting parents and strengthening families, improving income security for families, providing early and continuous learning experiences, promoting healthy adolescent development and creating safe, supportive and violence-free communities.

In the spring and summer of 1999, Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments held a public dialogue with Canadians. In June 2000, governments released the public report, *Public Dialogue on the National Children's Agenda — Developing a Shared Vision,* which confirmed the vision and the six areas for collaboration. The public dialogue also affirmed that the vision must embrace all children, including those with disabilities and special needs, newcomers to Canada, children in official language minority communities and children living in urban, rural and remote communities. This shared vision will guide the ongoing efforts of governments and all sectors of society in supporting families and children.

On September 11, 2000, the Government of Canada and provincial/territorial governments (with the exception of Quebec[1]) reached an agreement on early childhood development, a key priority under the National Children's Agenda. Beginning in April 2001, the Government of Canada will increase transfers to the provinces and territories by $2.2 billion over the next five years to improve and expand early childhood development (ECD) programs.

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[1] While sharing the same concerns on early childhood development, Quebec did not adhere to the federal/provincial document because sections of it infringe on its constitutional jurisdiction on social matters. Quebec intends to preserve its sole responsibility for developing, planning, managing and delivering early childhood development programs. Moreover, Quebec expects to receive its share of any additional federal funding for early childhood development programs without new conditions.

Provincial and territorial governments have agreed to use this increased funding to promote healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy; improve parenting and family supports; strengthen early childhood development, learning and care; and strengthen community supports. Provincial and territorial governments have the flexibility to determine their own priorities for investment within these four areas and to tailor programs to meet local needs. As a result, children and their parents and caregivers will benefit from improved services such as child care, parent resource centres and prenatal nutrition.

Regardless of how governments choose to invest in their youngest citizens, they have agreed to report publicly on their progress and on how children are faring. This will enable governments, and Canadians, to track progress in improving the well-being of young children. Governments have also agreed to work together on research and understanding of ECD and to share information on effective practices to improve child outcomes.

### *National Child Benefit*

At the June 1996 First Ministers' Meeting, child poverty was identified by the Prime Minister and premiers as a national priority. As a result, federal, provincial and territorial governments (with the exception of Quebec[2]) collaborated on developing a new integrated child benefit, the National Child Benefit. The NCB combines financial support with concrete measures to strengthen the connection between low-income families and the labour market. Launched in July 1998, the NCB provides new and expanded benefits, supports and services to low-income families with children. It creates a stronger national platform of income support for low-income families with children, while enabling flexible and responsive approaches to local social and labour market needs.

As its contribution to the NCB initiative, the Government of Canada has increased the child benefits it provides to all low-income families with children. In turn, most provinces, territories and First Nations have adjusted the income support they provide to children through social assistance programs while making sure total benefits to those families remain at least as high as they were before the NCB was introduced. These social assistance adjustments have made benefits equal for all low-income families, and have made funds available for reinvestment in new programs for low-income families with children, including income support, additional health benefits, child care, early childhood services and services for children at risk.

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[2] Quebec agrees with the basic principles of the National Child Benefit, which aims to increase the resources available for poor children and promote employment retention and the return to work. The family policy implemented by Quebec is consistent with this orientation. However, the Government of Quebec has not taken part in the development of the National Child Benefit because it wishes to assume control of income support for the children of Quebec. Consequently, any reference to joint federal/provincial/territorial positions in this text does not include Quebec.

By July 2001, the Government of Canada will have increased the National Child Benefit Supplement to the Canada Child Tax Benefit by $2.5 billion per year. As a result of this increase, a working family with two children and an income of up to $21 744 will receive $1810 a year more than prior to the implementation of the benefit. Moreover, maximum federal child benefits for the first child will reach at least $2500 per year by July 2004. The National Child Benefit will assist 1.4 million low-income Canadian families including 2.5 million children.

### *Other Initiatives*

In December 1999, the Government of Canada announced a $753-million investment to help address homelessness across Canada. The strategy focusses on fostering partnerships with the various levels of government and the private and voluntary sectors to reduce and prevent homelessness. Part of the strategy aims to incorporate socially displaced groups by enhancing programs, including the Urban Aboriginal Strategy, the Shelter Enhancement Initiative and the Residence Rehabilitation Assistance Program, and developing the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI). The SCPI will help engage all levels of government and partners in developing the tools needed to address homelessness and put in place a network of services and supports that people need to make a successful transition from the street to a more stable and secure life.

### Changing Workplace/Work-life Balance

The workplace is changing rapidly due to globalization, new technology and the information economy. There are significant impacts on the nature of employment, the ways in which people work and the emerging needs of workers.

The most recent emerging need in the workplace has been the increased stress felt by workers who are caught between increased demands at work and their family and community responsibilities. Employers are grappling with increased competitive pressures, due to global markets and consumer demand, at the same time as they recognize new employee needs, an aging workforce, the needs of dual-earner and single-parent families, and labour shortages in certain occupations. Increasingly, employees are demanding more flexible work time, and employers are designing human resources strategies aimed at recruiting and retaining employees by accommodating their needs for work-life balance.

The Labour Program, along with other branches within HRDC, is committed to identifying and addressing the key issues for workers in the changing workplace, and to assisting workplace partners in responding to the new requirements of the knowledge-based economy. To realize that commitment and support working parents, the Labour Program is working on legislative changes, promotional activities and a federal-provincial-territorial strategy.

In February 2000, federal, provincial and territorial ministers of labour examined the emergence of the work-family balance issue, and decided to collaborate to promote work and family balance.

**Take actions towards assuring that the Ministries of Labour have the necessary means to carry out this Plan of Action in areas within their jurisdiction.**

**Human Resources Development Canada**

In the mid-1990s, at the federal level, a government-wide process known as Program Review examined federal departments' programs and activities to identify the government's core roles and focus resources on priorities while reducing overall spending. The process achieved its objectives, reducing departmental spending by some $9 billion (nearly 20 percent) between 1994 and 1998.

Program Review also looked at areas where the federal and provincial/territorial governments had programs, activities and responsibilities to determine where greater co-operation or devolution would be appropriate. As a result, the federal government withdrew from many of its former activities in the areas of forestry, mining and recreation. It also transferred administration of most social housing units to the provinces and territories.

Federal transfer payments to the provinces were also restructured and reduced in the mid-1990s. This was done over several years to minimize the impact on provincial revenues. Transfers for health, post-secondary education and social assistance were in 1996 combined into a single Canadian Health and Social Transfer, giving the provinces greater flexibility in the application of these funds.

Each provincial or territorial government addressed the need for fiscal reform somewhat differently and on its own timetable, but all undertook wide-ranging reviews of spending leading to substantial restraint in programs. The result has been that, overall, governments in Canada are facing the year 2001 with their finances in better shape than at any time in the past 20 to 30 years.

Today, governments across Canada are able to maintain their core spending on social programs and many are beginning to reinvest in their most significant priorities, particularly in areas such as health and education as well as in the promotion of values such as equality, safety, co-operation and productivity in the workplace.

For example, in 1999-2000 total gross spending in the Labour Program was $158.7 million compared with $143.7 million in 1997-1998 and $156.7 million in 1998-1999. Almost 700 HRDC employees provide or directly support the activities of the Labour Program. The Program continues to meet its responsibilities under Canada's labour laws through quality service and the efficient use of resources, in particular by 1) supporting and implementing legislative change, 2) increasing its delivery of preventive services, 3) developing policy initiatives that reflect the changing nature of work and other priorities, 4) developing more information products, services and tools that meet Canadian workplace needs, 5) strengthening partnerships on workplace issues and 6) participating in international initiatives to protect workers' rights.

**Request the participation of the International Labour Organisation, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Organisation of American States to assist Labour Ministries to support international activities and exchange information on modernisation methods and strategies.**

**Human Resources Development Canada**

Through Human Resources Development Canada's programs and policies, Canada has been able to address various issues raised at the 1998 Summit of the Americas, including the rights of workers, training and gender equality. As previously noted, HRDC has a number of policies and programs that address labour rights, issues of working women and vulnerable groups, collective bargaining, safety and health, and social dialogue.

The Government of Canada strongly supports initiatives for promoting greater co-operation and information sharing among the multilateral and regional organizations.

# ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND FREE TRADE

## FREE TRADE AREA OF THE AMERICAS

Formal negotiations toward the Free Trade Area of the Americas were launched at the Second Summit of the Americas held in Santiago (Chile) in 1998. Leaders committed to achieve concrete progress by the year 2000 and finalize the negotiations by 2005.

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**Initiate the negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas, in accordance with the principles, objectives, structure, modalities and all other decisions as set out in the San José Ministerial Declaration, by convening the Trade Negotiations Committee no later than June 30, 1998 and the Negotiating Groups no later than September 30, 1998.**

Based on the key elements of the *1998 San José Ministerial Declaration*, substantial progress has been made in the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations.

The Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC), during Canada's tenure as chair, met for the first time in Buenos Aires (Argentina) in June 1998. The TNC is responsible for the oversight of the negotiations and meets regularly every 18 months under a rotational chair. Canada served as chair during the crucial start-up phase of the negotiations; with Argentina assuming the chair following the Fifth Trade Ministerial in Toronto (Canada) in November 1999. Argentina's tenure will conclude with its hosting the Sixth Trade Ministerial in Buenos Aires in early April 2001.

Meetings of the nine negotiating groups — including Market Access; Agriculture; Investment; Services; Government Procurement; Intellectual Property Rights; Subsidies, Anti-dumping and Countervailing Duties; Competition Policy; and Dispute Settlement — have taken place in Miami (United States) since September 1998. In addition, three bodies addressing horizontal issues have been established to provide additional input to the TNC: the Joint Government-Private Sector Committee of Experts on Electronic Commerce, the Consultative Group on Smaller Economies, and the Committee of Government Representatives on the Participation of Civil Society. Canada currently chairs the Negotiating Group on Government Procurement and serves as vice-chair of both the Negotiating Group on Competition Policy and the Joint Government-Private Sector Committee of Experts on Electronic Commerce.

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**Exercise the ultimate oversight and management of the negotiations.**

**Achieve concrete progress in the negotiations by the year 2000 and agree on specific business facilitation measures to be adopted before the end of the century.**

While Canada was chair, considerable progress was achieved on several fronts of the FTAA process, including the development of an institutional infrastructure for the negotiations. As a result, work programs were created for the nine negotiating groups, and for the bodies addressing the broader issues of e-commerce, smaller economies and civil society participation; the Administrative Secretariat was established in Miami; funding and support for the process were secured from the Tripartite Committee, consisting of the Organization of American States (OAS), the United National Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Inter-American Development Bank; and draft negotiating rules and procedures were devised.

The highlight of Canada's tenure as chair was hosting the Fifth Trade Ministerial in Toronto in November 1999. As part of an ongoing process of business facilitation, ministers agreed to adopt eight measures to streamline and simplify customs procedures and 10 measures to enhance the transparency of government rules and regulations affecting trade and investment. These measures will, once implemented, simplify administrative procedures and reduce the transaction costs of doing business in the Hemisphere and, through Web sites, inventories, guides and other tools, make information on conducting business in the Hemisphere more accessible to stakeholders.

In Toronto, ministers also took stock of progress made during the first 18 months of the negotiations and issued clear directions for the next stage. Specifically, ministers directed the negotiating groups to produce draft texts of their respective chapters of an FTAA agreement in time for the next Ministerial slated to take place in Argentina, in April 2001. The Trade Negotiations Committee has, in turn, been tasked with assembling the text from the negotiating groups and with working on the architecture of the agreement and on its general and institutional sections.

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**Ensure that the negotiating process is transparent and takes into account the differences in the levels of development and size of the economies in the Americas, in order to create opportunities for the full participation of all countries, including the smaller economies.**

Canada recognizes the special needs and circumstances affecting the integration of smaller economies into a free trade area of the Americas and has been a strong supporter of the cause of the smaller economies in the negotiations.

Canada is an active participant in meetings of the FTAA Consultative Group on Smaller Economies and contributes to the Group's discussions on issues such as the definition of smaller economies, technical assistance needs, and the concept of special and differential treatment.

Further, Canada, via the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), has directed substantial technical assistance resources to the more vulnerable countries of the Hemisphere with a view to reinforcing their capacity to integrate themselves fully into the world trading system and to participate fully in the FTAA negotiations process, thereby placing these countries in the position to reap the full benefits of a final agreement. While Canada maintains the position that all parties to an FTAA must ultimately be subject to the same undertakings and obligations, it is prepared to consider time-limited measures with individual countries, and in certain areas. Canada will continue its capacity-building efforts to help smaller economies in this regard.

CIDA-supported projects in this area include the $3 million Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Trade Policy Project, which provides technical assistance to government ministries and sub-regional institutions with a key role in international trade. Also, CIDA has assisted Central American countries through a trade-related technical assistance project, with the agricultural sector as a sectoral pilot.

Canada's views and leadership on the smaller economies agenda was evident at the Trade Ministerial in Toronto. There was considerable discussion focussed on the demands for special and differential treatment by smaller economies, which resulted in instructions to the Trade Negotiations Committee to examine how to address these issues in the FTAA, to provide guidance to the negotiating groups and to report to ministers in Argentina on progress achieved.

The Government of Canada is committed to conducting the Free Trade Area of the Americas negotiations, openly and inclusively, and to consulting closely with Canadians throughout the FTAA process. This consultations process will ensure that Canada's positions and priorities during the negotiations reflect the values, concerns and interests of Canadians. This is crucial to ensure broad public understanding and support for the FTAA. The avenues of dialogue with Canadians include the Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade; consultations with provincial/territorial representatives; the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Web site (www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac); ongoing, ad hoc meetings with stakeholders and senior officials; cross-Canada outreach missions, and parliamentary consultations.

The Government of Canada's ongoing, transparent and accessible consultations process has revealed that Canadians realize that they live in an increasingly interconnected world, and that they favour liberalized trade. There is also an appreciation of the need to ensure that the benefits of trade are distributed widely and that Canadian values and ideals are promoted and protected. The Government will continue its outreach and consultations efforts to keep Canada's trade agenda attuned to what Canadians are saying as negotiations proceed and issues become more clearly defined.

Within the FTAA process, Canada was instrumental in the establishment of the FTAA Committee of Government Representatives on the Participation of Civil Society at the 1998 Meeting of Trade Ministers. At the Meeting, it was agreed to invite representatives from non-governmental organizations to submit to the Committee written views on trade and trade-related issues. Canada was successful in obtaining a renewed mandate for a second round of submissions from civil society under Argentina's tenure as chair.

Furthermore, on the margins of the Toronto Meeting, the Government sponsored the Americas Civil Society Forum organized by non-governmental organizations under the leadership of a Canadian organization, Common Frontiers. A highlight of the Forum was the meeting of 22 FTAA trade ministers and vice ministers with representatives of a cross-section of civil society organizations from across the Americas. Ministers were presented with wide-ranging recommendations that were developed at the Americas Civil Society Forum and they engaged in a question and answer session with participants. The meeting was an unprecedented event in the trade negotiation process: the Americas Civil Society Forum demonstrated to participating countries that such dialogue is feasible and to the benefit of all parties involved. Canada played a key role in ensuring that the many voices from the Hemisphere could participate in the Forum, both constructively and inclusively.

The Government believes that considerable progress has been made in engaging our hemispheric partners on civil society issues; taking into account that we are in early days in the negotiations themselves and in the FTAA dialogue with civil society. Canada will be promoting continuous civil society engagement throughout the FTAA negotiations.

## STRENGTHENING, MODERNIZING AND INTEGRATING FINANCIAL MARKETS

Well-functioning financial markets are a key to promoting growth and development and to reducing countries' vulnerability to economic crises. Leaders at the 1998 Summit of the Americas endorsed commitments to strengthen, modernize and integrate financial markets across the Hemisphere.

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**Strengthen banking supervision in the Hemisphere through: implementation of the Basel Core Principles for Effective Banking Supervision; training programs to strengthen supervisory capacity; and establishment of sound, high-quality reporting and disclosure standards for banks, and creation of a Working Group to assist countries in this process.**

Finance Ministers of the Western Hemisphere held their third meeting in February 2000 to review — among other things — progress made on initiatives set forth at the Second Summit of the Americas.

The implementation of the Basel Core Principles for Effective Banking Supervision was examined at the meeting. The Association of Supervisors of Banks of the Americas is currently reviewing the implementation of these principles by various countries across the Hemisphere. Canada welcomes this initiative, funded by the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and encourages the implementation of internationally recognized standards and codes to strengthen financial systems, especially in the area of financial supervision and regulation.

The Government of Canada, in a joint effort with the World Bank and Schulich School of Business at York University, established the Toronto International Leadership Centre for Financial Sector Supervision as a mechanism to contribute to the strengthening of financial markets. The Toronto Centre, through various programs, offers senior supervisors from around the world an opportunity to share their real-world experiences about financial institutions and systemic achievements and failures. These programs also train senior executives on how to implement effective supervisory regimes in a globalized financial sector. To date, the Centre has organized nine programs on banking, two on securities and one on insurance in Toronto and has jointly organized a program on conglomerates in Basel, Switzerland with the Financial Stability Institute of the Bank for International Settlements. These programs were successful and attracted 228 senior managers from 83 countries, including Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay, among others from the Hemisphere.

Training at the Toronto Centre is based on real-world case studies, given by 23 former and practising supervisory executives, and is designed to reinforce best practices in the application of the core principles of prudent financial-sector supervision and regulation combined with internationally acceptable leadership and executive-development principles. A unique feature of the Centre is the use of peer support, both through the use of supervisors as trainers and through the provision of a resource centre and active Web-based and video-conferencing networks, where graduates of the course can participate in discussions of topics of special interest to them, thus allowing consultation with former fellow participants and senior experts from around the world.

In 2001, the Toronto Centre will organize six programs in Toronto — two each in banking, insurance and securities — and three joint programs with the Financial Stability Institute, one of which will be held in the Bahamas for Caribbean banking supervisors on the subject of consolidated supervision. As well, discussions are well underway to organize special programs for banking supervisors in Brazil, and for Latin American and Caribbean banking supervisors in their respective regions.

The Toronto Centre received additional financial support this year from the Bank for International Settlements and the International Monetary Fund.

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**Improve banking and securities market clearance and settlement systems in the Hemisphere, in order to facilitate the transparency, efficiency and security of internal and cross-border transactions.**

At the Third Western Hemisphere Finance Ministers Meeting the importance of transparent, efficient and secure clearance and settlement systems was also discussed. Countries expressed support to the World Bank and others for working on this initiative. Activities included the formation of an advisory council consisting of representatives of several central banks and bank supervisory institutions; the development of greater communication between securities regulators and central banks; and work on country assessments of Argentina, Chile and Peru. Ministers also examined the need to mobilize resources in order to improve clearance and settlement systems in the Hemisphere, and to establish a regionally based mechanism to advance the implementation of relevant international standards.

As part of its efforts to further combat money laundering, Canada updated its proceeds of crime legislation in June 2000. The new legislation provides for mandatory reporting of suspicious and other financial transactions, and of large cross-border currency movements. It also establishes the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada, a financial intelligence unit created in July 2000. Its purpose is to receive and analyze reported information on suspicious and other financial transactions, and provide leads to law enforcement agencies. Regulations are being finalized to implement the new legislation.

Canada provides financial assistance to a regional anti-money laundering body, the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (DFATF), to assist it in its mandate to help combat money laundering. Funding to this organization was recently increased to provide for the hire of a local lawyer for three years. The CFATF is comprised of 25 member states from the Caribbean and

Latin America. Canada also provides technical assistance and training to the region through the RCMP and the federal Department of Justice.

Progress on these initiatives will be reviewed at the Fourth Western Hemisphere Finance Ministers Meeting to be chaired by Canada in Toronto in early 2001.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Governments agreed to consider the importance of science and technology in the Hemisphere.

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**Recognise that science and technology are related to various areas and objectives of this Plan of Action within and beyond economic integration, free trade and sustainable development.**

**Industry Canada**

In February 1998, Industry Canada convened a meeting in Ottawa (Canada) to discuss science and technology (S&T) issues in the Americas. At the meeting, Canadian government representatives expressed an interest in obtaining more information on the various S&T initiatives in which Canadian and hemispheric organizations were currently involved. Industry Canada subsequently arranged for the development of a report which brings together current projects involving a wide range of public- and private-sector Canadian and hemispheric partners. The report demonstrates that Canadian organizations are engaged in many S&T initiatives with their partners in the Americas, and that new projects are emerging all the time.

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**Continue implementing the Cartagena Plan of Action, agreed to in 1996, with emphasis on strengthening the capacity of the countries in the Hemisphere to participate and benefit from the knowledge-based global economy, promoting, among other actions, the growth of the communications and information industries as strategic components of national, subregional and regional integration processes. In the context of the Cartagena Declaration, recognise the important role that existing regional institutions play in implementing this Plan of Action.**

**Industry Canada**

Industry Canada is working with public and private organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean to promote learning and training using information and communications technology. For example, in 1999, a group of Canadian experts from Industry Canada were invited to Santiago (Chile) to conduct presentations on Canada's Connectivity Agenda to a broad Chilean audience, including representatives from the Ministry of Economy. During this mission, Canada signed a memorandum of understanding with Chile to further advance Chile's connectivity agenda. Chile's Enlaces program is now working with Industry Canada's SchoolNet (a communications infrastructure aimed at linking all Canadian schools and libraries to the Internet) for content development, teacher training and community involvement.

**Apply science and technology to mitigate the damages caused by the effects of El Niño and other natural hazards, such as volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, earthquakes, and floods, and their impact on the economy and ecosystems, based on improved forecasting, prevention and response capacity, improved research and training methods to deal with natural hazards, and the application of science and technology to address the effects of climate variability on health, agriculture and water. In this context, cooperative research and exchange of information about El Niño and other natural hazards will be emphasised.**

### Environment Canada

The Government of Canada, along with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United States National Weather Service/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NWS/NOAA), the World Meteorological Organization, and the Government of Brazil organized an international symposium at the National Institute of Meteorology in Brasilia (Brazil), in November 1999. Its aim was to discuss the development of a flood forecasting system and ways to strengthen the capacities of national, regional and international institutions to improve the management of water resources and the prevention and mitigation of water-related disasters. The symposium focussed largely on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of flood forecasting modelling systems, including communications techniques in solving problems and achieving better co-ordination among those involved in disaster prevention and water-resources management. Some 125 experts and policy makers from different parts of the world participated.

One important outcome of the meeting was a set of guidelines for countries to use in establishing their capacities in flood forecasting, including managerial training, issuance of warnings, working with those involved in natural disasters mitigation, and management of water resources with respect to floods. The symposium was chaired by an Environment Canada expert and it led to a related workshop held in April 1999 in Tegucigalpa (Honduras), organized by NWS/NOAA and the Central American Regional Water Resources Committee.

Environment Canada hosted a symposium on building collaborative global change research in the Americas in June 1999 during the Sixth meeting of the Inter-American Institute Conference of Parties. Several Canadian universities, such as the University of Saskatchewan, Université du Québec, the University of Victoria and the University of Western Ontario have been engaged, through IAI research nodes, in collaborative research efforts, particularly those areas where Canadian expertise is at the forefront (e.g., studies on climate variability, ecosystems, integrated assessments, and human dimensions).

The Ibero-American Climate Project — conceived in 1993 by the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services of the Ibero-American countries and supported by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) — has as its main objective improving access to more reliable data and more accurate short-, medium- and long-term weather, climate and hydrological forecasts.

Funds were allocated from the Inter-American Development Bank, WMO, and governments of Canada, Spain, and the United States to address serious operational deficiencies that undermine the capacity of national meteorological and hydrological services to provide the services their users demand, such as early detection and warning of hazardous weather and seasonal forecasts. The project outlined four components, 1) modernization of observation networks; 2) modernization of information systems; 3) modernization of telecommunications; and 4) institutional strengthening and training. Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Peru are now entering the implementation phase of this project.

Technical, scientific and management expertise is being provided to approximately 500 technology and know-how projects annually. During 1998-1999, a number of climate change mitigation technology projects were funded, especially those focussing on green chemistry and vehicle and plant emission reductions.

In partnership with Natural Resources Canada and Industry Canada, support was also provided to 39 projects of the Technology Early Action Measures component of the Climate Change Action Fund (CCAF) for the development and commercialization of innovative technologies to reduce greenhouse gases and other environmental pollutants. Five evaluation and accountability frameworks were developed for the CCAF and these will be used to guide data collection, performance measurement and evaluation of funded projects.

Environment Canada, in conjunction with Health Canada, is investing, through the Toxic Substances Research Initiative, some $40 million over four years to promote scientific research into the links between toxic substances, environmental damage and human illness. Some $2.8 million will go to research on specific health and environmental issues such as endocrine disrupting substances, persistent organic pollutants, toxic forms of metals and the cumulative effects of toxins and air pollutants.

In March 2001, Canada will host a major conference on bio-diversity with a focus on science and information called Canada's Natural Capital, Investing in Bio-diversity for the Information Age. The conference will help to identify key areas for strategic investment in science and information technology.

EcoWatch is the volunteer community environmental monitoring component of Environment Canada's Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Network. EcoWatch provides hands-on experience in collecting environmental data, which in turn will help individuals to better understand and appreciate the environment and how it relates to human health. EcoWatch also helps to gather data used by scientists in their investigations into Canadian ecosystems.

Canada also promotes the development and adaptation of innovative water technologies internationally. A recent example is the water information system developed by Canadians and adopted by Mexico's national water agency for use in its water monitoring and interpretation programs. Other examples include various build-operate-transfer projects undertaken by Canada's Wastewater Technology Centre — a cross-sectoral, pro-active research, development and demonstration facility dedicated to technological solutions to environmental challenges. The Centre develops and evaluates new technologies in the fields of biotechnology, chemistry, and physics and applies these to solving environmental problems such as treatment and disposal of municipal wastewater, clean-up of contaminated groundwater, residue management and recovery, and pollution prevention.

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**Support the development and use of science, technology and innovation indicators in fulfilment of the Cartagena Plan.**

### Industry Canada

Industry Canada collaborates with the Ibero-American Network of Science and Technology Indicators, which electronically publishes a compendium of science and technology indicators that are better instruments for the understanding and analysis of science, technology and innovation issues (www.ricyt.edu.ar). Industry Canada's role in this effort is to provide an annual selection of national science and technology data, compiled by Statistics Canada, in a format compatible with the Network's requirements.

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**Promote actions to foster alliances among all sectors of society to advance cooperation and innovation in science and technology. It is recognised that university-industry relations, training in technology management and other human resource development programs, as well as participation of small and medium-sized companies, are important elements for utilising science and technology to achieve hemispheric objectives.**

### Environment Canada

Environment Canada, along with other stakeholders, has facilitated the participation of government and industry experts in the World Bank Clean Air Initiative in Latin American Cities. Co-operation in several areas is taking place, including technological initiatives and public-private partnerships; health and science aspects and risks of air pollutants (particularly ozone and particulate matter); the impact of transportation fuels and fuel additives on human health; air emission-reduction strategies and co-benefits; innovative technologies for field sampling exhaust emissions; environmental technology verification; enhanced air monitoring of the urban environment; and lessons learned in setting up and co-ordinating an air pollution surveillance network. The outcome of the Clean Air Initiative will be a comprehensive air quality management plan for each of the participating cities.

Environment Canada has been working with the Ecopetrol, the state oil company in Columbia, to develop and evaluate clean fuels for the country that will help alleviate the serious air pollution levels being experienced in major cities. This collaboration has also involved the design, fabrication, and operation of a world-class emissions research facility and has also used innovative technology for the field sampling of exhaust emissions during trials of these new fuels in urban buses.

### Canadian International Development Agency

In 1996, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) introduced a technology transfer approach in Brazil and the Southern Cone countries (Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay) to facilitate the sharing of Canadian know-how and practices to help partner countries meet pressing development challenges.

Two $18 million technology transfer funds were set up — one for Brazil and the other for the Southern Cone countries. To date, some 150 project ideas have been proposed. Projects funded include:

- a bio-safety project with key organizations in Chile and Argentina to improve biotechnology risk assessment capacity, information networks, and norms and standards for the agriculture sector;
- a watershed management project with key state agencies in Sao Paulo to improve water quality management in the region;
- a participatory municipal management project in Paraguay; and
- an energy conservation project to help improve the effectiveness of PROCEL, Brazil's national electric energy efficiency program.

An independent 1999 mid-term operational review concluded that the two funds are fostering important partnerships and that the potential for results is impressive.

## REGIONAL ENERGY CO-OPERATION

In order to ensure sustainable energy development and further hemispheric energy integration, governments undertook to consider additional efforts in the energy sector.

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**Promote policies and processes that facilitate the trade of products, goods and services related to the energy sector; give impetus to policies that facilitate the development of infrastructure, including across international boundaries, to further the integration of energy markets; foster the creation and strengthening of transparent and predictable regulatory regimes, which take into account the needs of different parties involved; promote the legal, fiscal, and regulatory systems in order to stimulate local and foreign private investment in the energy sector; increase access of rural inhabitants to energy services; and support policies and programs that will stimulate the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency.**

The Minister of Natural Resources Canada led a successful trade and investment mission to Argentina, Chile and Peru in November 1998. He was accompanied by three representatives and by more than 45 business people (30 from Canada and 15 Canadians resident in the countries visited) plus representatives from the governments of Ontario and Yukon.

The Minister conducted a series of bilateral meetings with his counterparts in each country and met with local business and government officials in an effort to create and extend Canada's partnerships with these countries. Also, the Minister effectively promoted Canadian policy interests in the areas of trade and investment and sustainable development.

In the planning of such missions, the Government of Canada, through the Team Canada Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, consults with its stakeholders (i.e., the provinces, Canadian missions abroad, associations, etc.) to determine the target/priority sectors. Energy has been a priority on past Team Canada missions and will be a priority sector for forthcoming missions.

Following the First Summit of the Americas held in Miami (United States) in 1994, the Hemispheric Energy Initiative was established to develop an energy agenda for the region and assure its implementation. The ongoing process operates on several levels — it comprises ministers who guide the work and maintain the political momentum; government officials who identify and carry out activities through a steering committee and working groups; and business representatives who provide input to ministers on regional issues of concern.

Canada has participated in the Hemispheric Energy Ministers Meetings since the Miami Summit. Meetings were held in 1994. Canada participated in the Meetings in Washington, D.C. (U.S.) in October 1995; Santa Cruz de la Sierra (Bolivia) in July 1996; Caracas (Venezuela) in January 1998 and New Orleans (U.S.) in July 1999.

The Fourth Hemispheric Energy Ministers Meeting in New Orleans included ministerial meetings as well as roundtables with ministers and business representatives on a wide range of energy issues. Discussions focussed on enhancing investment in clean energy; advancing intra-regional energy market integration; and continuing the transition to a market-oriented business climate. Canada was one of the 30 countries that signed the New Orleans Declaration and the Joint Statement on Clean Development and Use of Energy.

Canada is an active member of the Hemispheric Energy Steering Committee (HESC) — the body responsible for implementing the energy agenda of the Summit of the Americas. Other active members of this committee include: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, the United States and Venezuela. International organizations such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations Development Program, the Latin American Energy Organization, the Andean Fund and Renewable Energy in the Americas advise the Committee and participate in some of its meetings.

To date, there have been 11 meetings of the HESC. The most recent were hosted by Canada and Peru in 2000. Issues currently being addressed by the Steering Committee include the implementation of commitments made by energy ministers in New Orleans; funding, working group restructuring and priority setting; and operational guideline development for the Hemispheric Energy Initiative. Also, discussions are ongoing on formalizing business, NGO and civil society involvement in the Hemispheric Energy Initiative process, and preparations are well underway for the next Hemispheric Energy Ministers Meeting scheduled for March 2001, in Mexico City.

In the area of working group restructuring, it has been agreed that the themes of social development, the environment, integration and regulation with respect to energy would underpin the work of the groups as well as ad hoc activities, such as one-time workshops or seminars. Several proposals are being considered in the areas of rural electrification, clean energy options, natural gas, climate change and energy efficiency.

CIDA supports many energy sector initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean. Projects include the $25 million Central American regional electrical energy project. The project is assisting in the practical implementation of reforms already underway in the Central American countries in the area of electrical energy. The reforms are intended to improve the efficiency of the companies and institutions involved, increase private-sector participation, provide improved delivery of electrical service, and extend access to electricity to the 50 percent of Central Americans who currently do not have access. The reforms will also allow these countries to take advantage of regional collaboration and interconnections as a means of reducing costs and increasing the security of supply. The project is providing practical assistance in each area addressed by the reforms. CIDA has also supported the rehabilitation of Électricité d'Haïti.

CIDA is also implementing a second phase of the Bolivian Oil and Gas Project. This $7.9 million project is strengthening the regulatory bodies mandated to regulate Bolivia's oil and gas sector and assisting in the creation of an enabling environment for oil and gas investments and activities. Other CIDA initiatives in the energy sector include the following:

– an $11.4 million project will strengthen those institutions that will be involved in regulating and monitoring the hydrocarbons sector in Peru;

– a $500 000 project in Bolivia will develop and deliver specifically designed training programs to Indigenous communities and their representatives to assist them in participating in the country's energy development;

– a $500 000 regional project in South America will assess the impact of applying new fuel specifications, increasing product demand and sector reforms on the refining industry in the Latin American and Caribbean region;

– a $4.8 million regional project will strengthen the capacity of member companies of the Regional Association of Oil and Natural Gas Companies to develop and implement environmental protection technologies;

– a $4.8 million project with OLADE (Latin American Energy Organization) will provide institutional strengthening and human resource development projects with the goal of assisting in the strengthening of environmental practices and regulatory controls governing the energy sector in OLADE member countries. The main focus of the project is in the areas of energy and environmental management, the formulation of laws and regulations and on developing training programs and establishing institutional linkages between Canada and the region. The project is being executed by the University of Calgary; and

– an $11.3 million project with the Colombia Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Mines and Energy and allied institutions responsible for regulating the energy and mining sectors is assisting in implementing new regulatory and institutional frameworks for the energy and mining sectors, supporting the transfer of technology and knowledge and assisting in developing new environmental policies and guidelines to strengthen environmental monitoring and enforcement capacity within the Government of Colombia.

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**Encourage the Parties to work toward achieving the objectives and goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; recognise the key role technology plays in managing the environmental aspects related to energy, and encourage the exchange of technology, information, and experiences, as well as to share views on the Clean Development Mechanism.**

Canada, along with 166 nations, signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, in which countries agreed to aim to return greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000. In 1998, Canada also signed the Kyoto Protocol, which commits it to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels for the period 2008-2012.

Canadian scientists are studying climate change processes; developing computerized climate models; and observing and tracking climate trends and variations in Canada. Canada published *The Canada Country Study: Impacts and Adaptation* in 1998, a national assessment of potential climate change impacts (social, biological, and economic), including sectoral and regional analyses of impacts, suggesting how we might adapt to the expected changes.

Canada instituted an unparalleled two-year consultation process on climate change involving more than 450 experts from across the country. The experts developed extensive reports on the full range of options for all sectors of the Canadian economy and all regions of the country to do their share in reducing GHG emissions and working toward meeting Canada's Kyoto targets.

In October 2000, the Government of Canada released *Action Plan 2000 on Climate Change*, which reflects the government's contribution to Canada's First National Climate Change Business Plan — the first in a series of integrated federal, provincial and territorial action plans to deal with climate change. Federal initiatives draw extensively from the results of the two-year consultation process, capture many of the best ideas put forward by stakeholders and focus on strong actions to reduce emissions; to increase energy efficiency and waste reduction; and to foster research and development, and/or the use of less carbon-intensive technologies.

*Action Plan 2000* puts Canada firmly on the path to meeting its Kyoto commitment. When fully implemented, the package of measures will reduce GHG emissions by about 65 megatonnes per year, which represents about one third of the emission reductions required to meet our Kyoto target. Canada's plan focusses on key sectors and includes initiatives in transportation, energy (oil and gas production and electricity), industry, buildings, forestry and agriculture, international projects, technology, science and adaptation.

The Government of Canada announced an additional $500 million over the next five years to fund the measures put forward in *Action Plan 2000.* Over the next few months, it will work with the provincial and territorial governments, and stakeholders, to fine tune the measures and also seek partnerships for its implementation.

Also in October 2000, Canada's federal, provincial and territorial ministers of energy and environment met in October. They agreed to release a national implementation strategy and the First National Business Plan on Climate Change, and referred a draft federal-provincial-territorial framework agreement to their governments for ratification at their next joint meeting.

These new investments supplement the initiatives announced by the Government of Canada in its 2000 Budget. It committed an investment of $625 million over five years for climate change in a number of critical areas, including:

- promoting technology innovation with the $100 million Sustainable Development Technology Fund;
- enhancing climate change and atmospheric research with $60 million to fund the Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences;
- helping communities take action with the $25 million Green Municipal Enabling Fund and the $100 million Green Municipal Investment Fund;
- committing an additional $15 million to expand its purchase of Green Power; and
- renewing the Climate Change Action Fund and energy efficiency and renewable energy programs with an additional $210 million.

In addition to these ongoing domestic efforts, Canada believes that international co-operation is essential to addressing global climate change. Canada intends to aim to achieve the majority of its Kyoto targets through actions at home, however, the Canadian government strongly supports the development of open and effective market-based mechanisms to help all countries effectively reduce emissions and meet their sustainable development goals.

As an example, the 2000 Budget announced the Canada Climate Change Development Fund, a $100 million initiative to encourage partnerships with developing countries to assist them in building their capacity to reduce emissions, while enhancing their sustainable development.

These funds will:

- be targeted to priorities in the areas of emissions reduction, carbon sequestration, adaptation, and capacity building;
- help developing countries undertake projects to start reducing their own growing emissions; and

– provide opportunities for Canada's world class technology and know-how in the expanding market for climate change solutions.

In another international initiative, Canada has joined with four other countries and 12 private-sector partners to invest in the World Bank's recently announced Prototype Carbon Fund. Canada's $15 million contribution will help the fund enable participants to learn through experience about how two of the Kyoto Protocol's market-based mechanisms — Joint Implementation and the Clean Development Mechanism — could benefit developed and developing countries.

The Prototype Carbon Fund will invest in emission-reduction projects in developing countries and in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, with the emission-reduction credits being returned to investors, such as Canada. The fund will help participants to learn through experience about how the Kyoto Protocol's market-based mechanisms could benefit developed and developing countries and provide the Government of Canada with a strong base in the emerging international carbon market. Investments announced by Canada in 2000 resulted in a commitment of $1.1 billion over the next five years, building on the $850 million that the Government of Canada has spent on climate change initiatives from 1995 to 1999. Total investments to date amount to close to $2 billion.

Canada, along with other countries, including those in the Americas, is an active participant in the meetings of the Conference of the Parties to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). At the Fourth Conference of the Parties (CoP4) held in November 1998, Canada and its international partners developed an action plan that sought to address outstanding issues of the Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. The Government of Canada was one of the 182 governments who participated in the Sixth Conference of the Parties (CoP6) to the UNFCCC held in November 2000. Canada will continue to do what it can to facilitate discussions at all levels with a view to a successful outcome, when the Conference of Parties reconvenes, most likely in May 2001.

Canada, with Argentina, is co-ordinating the Climate Change Working Group of the Hemispheric Energy Initiative, which held its inaugural meeting in February 1999, where it developed a work plan that identified workshops and roundtable discussions to exchange views and information on climate change initiatives, strategies and policies. A specific action item was identified to hold a workshop to exchange information and experiences on opportunities of the Kyoto Protocol for the energy sectors in the Americas, with a focus on the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

To encourage countries to work toward achieving the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and in particular to facilitate CDM projects, Canada's Clean Development Mechanism and Joint Implementation Office of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has prepared market studies of CDM potential in Argentina, the Caribbean, Central America and Chile. These studies are available to Canadian companies interested in identifying CDM project opportunities in those markets.

Canada's interest in climate change was reinforced at the 29th General Assembly of the Organization of American States held in Guatemala City (Guatemala) in June 1999. At this meeting, Canada supported the resolution on Climate Change in the Americas that instructed the Inter-American Council for Integral Development to consult with member states of the OAS on the importance of climatic change. At the June 2000 General Assembly in Windsor (Canada), the Council was charged with keeping climate change under review and mobilizing resources among member states.

At the Third Hemispheric Meeting of Energy Ministers in Caracas (Venezuela) in January 1998, ministers recognized the key role technology plays in managing environmental aspects related to energy and urged hemispheric co-operation in this area. Ministers demonstrated this commitment by establishing a working group on climate change for the purposes of exchanging information and analyzing activities and mechanisms for regional co-operation.

In Canada, new technologies play an essential role in managing environmental matters. Canada has recently undertaken various Technology Early Action Measures (TEAM) projects with Latin America. TEAM Projects are designed to lower greenhouse gas emissions in Canada and around the world. Projects in Latin America include tree inoculation, energy efficiency, landfill gas capture and solar drying.

## HEMISPHERIC INFRASTRUCTURE

### Telecommunications

Leaders at the Second Summit of the Americas endorsed mandates in response to the significant role of the telecommunications sector in the economy, education, trade, finance and social development in countries of the region.

In addressing these mandates, the Government of Canada works within the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission (CITEL), as well as with the private telecommunications sector.

CITEL is an entity of the Organization of American States with a mandate to facilitate and further the development of telecommunications in the Americas. CITEL is comprised of four Committees: The Permanent Executive Committee (COM/CITEL), Permanent Consultative Committee One (CITEL/PCC.I), Permanent Consultative Committee Two (CITEL/PCC.II), and Permanent Consultative Committee Three (CITEL/PCC.III). Since 1998, the CITEL/PCC.I (a technical body that works to provide advice on standards co-ordination, planning, financing, construction, operations, maintenance, technical assistance, equipment certification processes, rate principles, and other matters related to the use, implementation, and operation of public telecommunications services in the member states) has been actively pursuing a work program responding to the mandates outlined in the Santiago Action Plan. Canada has a strong presence in the CITEL/PCC.I and plays a central role in many of its working groups.

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**Establish strategies to support the development and continuous updating of a regional telecommunications infrastructure plan, taking into account national plans, the need for universal access to basic telecommunications services throughout the Region and the evolution of Global Information Society.**

To establish strategies to support the development and continuous updating of a regional telecommunications infrastructure plan, Canada tabled a standards roadmap for its Information Highway (i.e., Canada's information infrastructure ) at the eleventh meeting of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission/Permanent Consultative Committee One (CITEL/PCC.I) in Buenos Aires (Argentina) in October 1999. A standards roadmap is designed to provide forward-oriented reference to materials to assist technical planning staff prepare for and implement communications technologies. The roadmap will ultimately provide a comprehensive reference guide, and tool, for illustrating the utility of standards in various situations. Based on data that was used to create its national standards roadmap, Canada submitted a draft standards roadmap for the Americas at the June 2000 CITEL/PCC.I meeting. The primary objective of an inter-American standards roadmap is to encourage the use of standards based on solutions by those involved in supplying information infrastructure services. The roadmap was welcomed by participants as a practical contribution that would be immediately useful.

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**Work together in close cooperation with the private sector to rapidly build out the telecommunications infrastructure in the Region, adopting strategies to make affordable access available to all for basic telephone service and the Internet, such as implementing the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission guidelines on value added services and encouraging the development of community information service centers that provide access to basic telephone and value-added services, computers, the Internet and multimedia services bearing in mind the diverse needs of the countries of the Region and divergent levels of development.**

At the June 2000 Inter-American Telecommunication Commission/Permanent Consultative Committee One (CITEL/PCC.I) meeting, Industry Canada submitted a draft discussion paper related to the standards roadmap (see section above). The meeting featured a discussion to revisit the need to include Internet developments throughout the region. Within a new group focussing on approaches to Internet infrastructure, Canada is taking the lead to produce a document describing how a different type of telecommunications infrastructure can be used to provide Internet access in a range of environments found in the region. The first draft of the document is complete, and is now being refined with assistance from the private sector.

To promote the conditions necessary for countries in the Americas to develop global infrastructure, the Working Group on the promotion of Global Information Infrastructure (GII) was created in 1999. As co-chairs, Canada and Mexico are taking the lead to develop policies for the GII Working Group focussing on the pillars of technology infrastructure, content, and applications. Activities underway, such as the standards roadmap for the Americas, complement the GII working group's recent approach.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has also been active in support of the telecommunications theme of the Santiago action plan. Most of CIDA's initiatives were in the Andean region to provide better access to telecommunication services for populations. In Ecuador, CIDA has implemented a $1.2 million project to allow international long-distance service directly out of Cuenca. Also in Cuenca and surrounding villages, a $400 000 project has provided 200 public phones to increase the community's telephony services. Finally, a $750 000 CIDA contribution has helped with the implementation of a digital network for commercial institutions, with a priority given to rural areas of the country. This shift from analogue to digital will provide a new array of possibilities including tele-education, video conferencing and tele-medicine.

In Bolivia, CIDA is implementing many projects in rural telephony including a $1.47 million project to extend connectivity to seven previously non-serviced towns in the region of Santa Cruz, while increasing capacity of towns already on the system. Also in the sector of rural telephony, two projects worth $3.1 million in the regions of Potosi Sur and Norte have helped provide connectivity to 50 previously non-serviced towns. In addition, two projects in Ramal Oeste and Est e totalling $4 million have added 89 new sites to the telephony system. Finally, a $1.6 million project assists in the expansion of the Northern Central Telecom company by optimizing the existing telecommunications systems through relocation and addition of switches, increasing operating stations and increasing line capacity.

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**Promote, in cooperation with the private sector, the exchange and distribution of information concerning regulatory matters such as universal access/service, interconnection and the establishment of independent regulatory bodies, taking into account the commitments made in the World Trade Organisation's Agreements on Trade in Basic Telecommunications Services (the GBT Agreement), developments in the Free Trade Area of the Americas process, and the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the 1996 Senior Telecommunications Officials Meeting held in Washington with a view to developing, wherever possible, and subject to national constraints, best practice guidelines and requesting when needed the assistance of CITEL, regional telecommunications organizations, the International Telecommunications Union, the Inter-American Development Bank and others as appropriate.**

Canada contributed information on its domestic telecommunications regulatory regime to the CITEL/PCC.I project to compile a document outlining the regulatory processes used in the region. The group working on this project is expanding its work to examine Internet issues. Possible topics for this new undertaking include, but are not limited to, standardization, best practices in tariffing and settlement, regulation of service providers, and delivery of applications via the Internet. The work will assist member states to learn from one another and accelerate the development of the information infrastructure for the Americas.

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**Foster, together with the private sector, the development of applications over electronic networks, such as the Internet, broadcast television and radio, that taking into account different socio-economic conditions and languages, will support education, health, agriculture and sustainable rural development, electronic commerce and other applications assisting small savers, micro-enterprises and small- and medium-size enterprises and modernisation of the State.**

The Government of Canada believes that in building the Information Highway, infrastructure, applications and content are all of critical importance to the economic and social development of Canada and its hemispheric neighbours. To help Canadians take advantage of the Internet and information and communications technology generally, the federal government has a vision and plan to make Canada the most connected country in the world. It is called Connecting Canadians. This initiative includes a number of innovative programs and services to make the Information Highway accessible to all Canadians. Programs such as SchoolNet and VolNet are helping to connect public schools, First Nations schools, libraries, and the voluntary sector to the Internet; while the Community Access Program is providing public Internet access to all Canadians, including those in rural and remote communities. Other Connecting Canadians initiatives are addressing issues of content , e-commerce, and putting government services on-line. Many of these programs are recognized around the world for their innovative and exciting approach to harnessing information and communications technology for the benefit of citizens.

As part of the Connecting Canadians initiative, Industry Canada created the Office of International Partnerships. The Office provides any country or foreign organization seeking to build its own electronic learning networks and to develop related programs, with a single point of access to the best of Canada's information and communications technology (ICT) skills and products. It also links foreign governments, agencies and companies with Canadian organizations, companies and entrepreneurs, who develop and apply ICT to learning and training and help identify opportunities for partnerships and alliances in global markets.

Canada shares its connectivity programs with other countries in the region, such as Chile and Argentina, and works closely with them in the implementation of their own connectivity agenda and initiatives.

Canadian support for the development of a connectivity agenda in Chile has been a three-fold process: Canadian officials have met with the Presidential Inter-Ministerial Committee for Public Sector Modernization; the Ministry of Economy, Development, Reconstruction and Mining; and the Ministry of Finance, Chile's tax department. To date, Canada has signed five memorandums of understanding (MoU) with the federal and provincial governments of Chile, as well as with educational institutions. In 1998, Canada signed a letter of understanding with the Inter-Ministerial Committee to further entrench connectivity activities in Chile. As a result of a MoU signed with Chile's Ministry of Economy in 1999, Industry Canada's Strategis developed an action plan for the Government of Chile to establish an on-line information network for Chilean businesses. In 2000, representatives of Chile's Income Tax Department met Canadian experts to learn the use of connectivity for tax filing and government administration.

Canada played a pivotal role in the design and implementation of Argentina's connectivity and information society initiatives. Since 1998, Industry Canada's Office of International Partnerships has signed 11 MoUs with the federal and provincial governments of Argentina and with private institutions. In an MoU signed in 1998, Canada agreed to assist the Province of San Luis develop a connectivity agenda. This $700 000 initiative, known as San Luis On-Line, was designed to promote the social and economic development of the Province. Some of the Canadian organizations that supported this project include International Datacasting Corporation, Lanark Communication Network, New Brunswick's Information Highway Secretariat, the Canadian Commercial Corporation and the Office of International Partnerships. Canada also signed an

MoU with the the Federal Council of the Provinces — a public organization bringing together the 23 provinces of Argentina, plus the Government of the City of Buenos Aires. The purpose of the MoU was to assist the Council in the development of connectivity activities across Argentina. The Council's Federal Information System for Production Program and it's Digital Collections Program are based on Canada's SchoolNet programs.

Working in close collaboration with the private sector, the Canadian government has concentrated on creating the most favourable environment possible in areas that are critical to the rapid development of e-commerce. The Government of Canada also promotes the rapid deployment and use of e-commerce throughout the economy and considers it to be an important tool for economic development worldwide. To foster electronic networks in advancing business relations within the Americas, Canada has contributed to CITEL's e-commerce project (led by Mexico) by sharing its own e-commerce experience, and actively participates in the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Joint Government Private Sector Committee of Experts on Electronic Commerce.

The FTAA Joint Government Private Sector Committee of Experts on Electronic Commerce began its work in the fall of 1998, producing a report to the ministers one year later. The report outlines the conclusions reached by the Joint Committee with respect to how to broaden the benefits of e-commerce and to deal with it within the FTAA negotiations. The report makes recommendations to strengthen the information infrastructure, to increase participation, to clarify the rules of the electronic marketplace, and to increase consumer and market confidence. Following delivery of this report, the Joint Committee's term was extended at the 1999 Toronto (Canada) Trade Ministerial. In its work plan, adopted in April 2000, the Joint Committee chose to examine several key topics in greater detail. Among these topics, the Committee has already considered the importance of communications access and infrastructure to the countries of the Hemisphere, as well as best practices in supporting the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises in e-commerce. The Joint Committee will also be considering other matters important to the use of e-commerce in the Hemisphere, such as on-line payment systems.

To foster electronic networks for health-related matters, Canada has also offered information and advice to CITEL/PCC.I's initiatives for tele-medicine and tele-education. Health Canada also gave a presentation on the use of tele-health technologies for the Ninth Conference of Spouses of Heads of State and Government of the Americas, held in Ottawa (Canada) in fall 1999; and it produced a video in English, Spanish and French demonstrating how tele-health technologies can break down barriers of distance, access and cost to health.

Health Canada launched an Internet program entitled the Global Public Health Intelligence Network (GPHIN). GPHIN is a unique international warning system for the early detection and validation of health risks and other public health issues and is currently focussing on over 30 communicable diseases. It will soon introduce an intelligent search engine and expand the system to other fields such as food and water safety, environmental health, and the health impacts of natural disasters. Health Canada's Laboratory Centre for Disease Control and the World Health Organization are working together on this pilot project.

Similarly, the Health Infostructure Support Program (Health Canada) is a shared-cost funding program that supports trial, demonstration or pilot projects aimed at proving, evaluating, or raising the level of awareness of advanced network-based services in areas such as public health, health surveillance, Aboriginal health, population health information, pharmacare, home care and tele-health. With this program, the federal government attempts to provide Canadian organizations involved in the provision of health services with a means to encourage the health sector to use information and communications technologies and to further test and assess the use of new information technologies in their domain.

**Encourage CITEL to address, with some urgency, studies of the standards coordination aspects of the telecommunications infrastructure, including the areas of Telecommunications Management Network and Intelligent Networks so that the network can evolve to meet the interconnection requirements and to support the implementation of new applications in the regional context.**

The Inter-American Telecommunication Commission/Permanent Consultative Committee One's (CITEL/PCC.I) Working Group on Standards Co-ordination has concentrated on establishing studies of the standards co-ordination related to telecommunications infrastructure and services. While it was chair, Canada prepared a paper on the use of Signalling System # 7 (SS#7)[3] for national applications (national network interconnection). The group's work on SS#7 was accepted and the Common Standards Document (CSD) defining the protocol agreed upon. The CSD was also approved in the areas covering the operation of cordless telephones and similar wireless devices.

**Continue to examine ways to develop consistent regulatory approaches among member countries leading to the promotion of greater commonality in the certification processes for telecommunications equipment and to the establishment of a framework and to move toward the negotiation and implementation of a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for telecommunications equipment encompassing all the countries of the Region.**

At the second forum of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission/Permanent Consultative Committee One (CITEL/PCC.I) CITEL / PCC.I on telecommunications held in March 1999, CITEL/PCC.I created a rapporteur group on the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for telecom equipment led by Canada. As rapporteur, Canada has achieved agreement among parties (50 countries) to support the MRA text.

Canada was commended by the CITEL/PCC.I chair for the rapporteur's success in spearheading the MRA process. COM/CITEL approved the MRA in December 1999, which gives official status to the Agreement. Canada has been tasked with overseeing the implementation of the MRA, reporting directly to the chair of PCC.I. Once implemented, the MRA will reduce the time to market cost of introducing new telecommunications equipmen t significantly, with estimated savings in the tens of millions of dollars. COM/CITEL forwarded a resolution to the Organization of American States General Assembly requesting that the Assembly take note of and congratulate CITEL for its progress in advancing the Summit's telecommunications mandates.

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[3] *SS7* - Signaling System 7 – is an addressing protocol that speeds up call processing by operating out of band. The protocol includes fraud detection, caller ID, store and forward, ring back, concurrent data, etc (Source: LDDS WorldCom Network Services Telecommunications Glossary)

At the twelfth PCC.I meeting in Porlamar (Venezuela), Canada was appointed co-chair of the Permanent Working Group on Certification Processes and Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRA). The Working Group agreed to find a means of co-operating with Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation on the implementation of its substantially similar MRA, and to hold a workshop on implementation at the next PCC.I meeting in October 2000.

### Transportation

At the Summit of the Americas in Santiago, governments agreed to advance sectoral co-operation on transportation.

**Undertake the necessary actions to implement, to the fullest extent possible, and taking into account subregional sectoral agreements, decisions, and projects, the Joint Ministerial Declaration of the 2nd Hemispheric Summit on Transportation, held in Santiago, Chile, in April 1996, aimed at: promoting market-oriented, integrated, financially viable, and environmentally sustainable transportation systems and services, and providing safe, efficient, and reliable passenger and cargo services that foster the economic growth and development of our countries.**

**Develop a plan aimed at ensuring the highest level of safety in air, sea and land transportation systems, improving infrastructure and increasing environmental protection by improving compliance with international standards and recommended practices established, such as those established by the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the International Maritime Organisation.**

**Engage in discussions to develop a cooperation program, taking into account the Santiago and San Salvador Declarations of the Regional Conferences on Confidence and Security Building Measures, which would address maritime and air transport of nuclear and other hazardous wastes and, where appropriate, work with the relevant international organisations to strengthen or develop standards governing the transport of such goods and its safety.**

**Prepare a profile, with the cooperation of United Nations Economic Commission on Latin American and the Caribbean, of regional transportation systems and services taking into account agreements, decisions, projects and studies already prepared by regional and hemispheric organisations. Such a profile will identify the main problems and opportunities faced by the countries in the Hemisphere as a first step toward establishing regional transportation priorities and policies, with respect to, among other things, the harmonisation of standards and the exchange of technology.**

**Seek, from international financial institutions, resources necessary to undertake, as soon as possible, transportation infrastructure projects in the Americas, including those which take into account the specific needs of the smallest economies.**

Canada's Minister of Transport participated in meetings of the Western Hemisphere Transport Ministers in Santiago (Chile) in 1996, and New Orleans (United States) in 1998. In New Orleans, the ministers established the Western Hemisphere Transport Initiative (WHTI) as an element of the Summit of the Americas process, and called for the development of terms of reference for its executive committee. At the same meeting they established eight priority action areas for follow-up by the WHTI, based on the goals established in the Santiago Plan of Action. These priority action areas are: 1) An action plan for integration; 2) a transportation statistics system for the Americas; 3) a disaster-response plan; 4) a compendium of safety- and incident- response best practices; 5) a best-practices report on transportation infrastructure financing; 6) capacity-building seminars; 7) information exchange on transportation technologies; and 8) a conference on the effects of the year 2000 computer problem (Y2K) on transportation systems in the Hemisphere. Also in New Orleans, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean tabled a document entitled *Profile of Transportation Systems of the Americas*, which included input from Transport Canada.

At the New Orleans meeting, Canada offered to lead the second priority action — the development of a transportation statistics system for the Americas. By way of follow-up, Transport Canada has created the Western Hemisphere Transport Data System (WHTDS). Under this project, Transport Canada has developed a WHTDS Web site (www.whtds-sdtho.org), and recently completed a survey on the availability of transportation data among the countries and organizations in the region.

As a follow-up to the New Orleans Ministerial, Canada worked with Brazil and Chile in the development of the terms of reference for the WHTI Executive Committee, which were endorsed in September 2000. As of October 2000, Canada occupies the position of chair of the WHTI Executive Committee. Jamaica and Bolivia are co-chairs.

With respect to the transport of nuclear and other hazardous wastes, ministers attending the New Orleans meeting agreed to encourage compliance with the standards established by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); and engage in ongoing discussions with the goal of increasing mutual understanding. Canada maintains laws that comply with IMO, ICAO and IAEA norms, and engages in consultations with other nations largely through these organizations.

Many of the WHTI transport ministers, including Canada's, met for an informal roundtable discussion in Washington, D.C. (U.S.) in October 2000. At that meeting, Canada delivered a report on the status of work under the eight priority action areas. Ministers will meet again for a full ministerial meeting in Uruguay in March 2001 to discuss further work under the WHTI and identify areas for future action. Also, ministers will consider a proposal by the U.S. for a partnership for safer skies in the Americas.

The WHTI Web site (www.transport-americas.org), recently developed by the Office of Summit Follow-up of the Organization of American States in collaboration with Transport Canada, contains information on progress achieved under the eight priority action areas identified in New Orleans.

## ERADICATION OF POVERTY AND DISCRIMINATION

At the 1998 Summit of the Americas in Santiago (Chile), leaders endorsed a series of mandates aimed at contributing to the eradication of poverty and discrimination in the Americas. The measures contained in this chapter of the Plan of Action seek to facilitate the inclusion of all citizens of the Hemisphere in the community and democratic transformation of the region.

The Government of Canada is committed to a high and rising quality of life for all Canadians. Federal, provincial and territorial governments have developed an extensive system of social safety-net programs aimed at reducing poverty and helping to ensure an adequate standard of living. These programs include social insurance for employed and self-employed persons, benefits for families with children, and pension benefits for senior citizens. As well, all provinces/territories, and some municipalities, provide social assistance (welfare), in prescribed circumstances, to low-income individuals and families. The Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST), a legislated federal funding arrangement (block grant), provides stable and predictable funding to provinces/territories for social assistance, as well as for social services, health and post-secondary education. The CHST is made up of a combination of cash and tax point transfers.

Canada's public pension programs have done much to reduce poverty among senior citizens. For example: between 1980 and 1996, average incomes of seniors increased, and 80 percent of this gain occurred among those in the lowest quintiles. Statistics Canada has reported that the proportion of seniors with low income has dropped from 34 percent in 1980 to 19 percent in 1997, indicating that less than one in five seniors in Canada live in a low-income situation.

At the June 1996 First Ministers' Meeting, child poverty was identified by the Prime Minister and Premiers as a national priority. As a result of this, federal, provincial and territorial governments (with the exception of Quebec[1]) collaborated on developing a new integrated child benefit, the National Child Benefit. The National Child Benefit, launched in July 1998, provides new and expanded benefits, supports and services to low-income families with children. It creates a stronger national platform of income support by provinces and territories for low-income families with children while enabling flexible and responsive approaches to local social and labour market needs. Additional information on the National Child Benefit can be found in Chapter 2.

The Government of Canada also provides programs for groups at greatest risk of falling into poverty. These include the Community Action Program for Children; Youth Internship Canada; Youth Service Canada; and the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy.

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[1] Quebec agrees with the basic principles of the National Child Benefit, which aims to increase the resources available for poor children and promote employment retention and the return to work. The family policy implemented by Quebec is consistent with this orientation. However, the Government of Quebec has not taken part in the development of the National Child Benefit because it wishes to assume control of income support for the children of Quebec. Consequently, any reference to joint federal-provincial–territorial positions in this text does not include Quebec.

## FOSTERING THE DEVELOPMENT OF MICRO-, SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

In the global economy, a firm's growth and productive capacity depends on its ability to access capital and the knowledge and capabilities of its people. Small companies can often respond faster to market opportunities and stay in closer touch with customer needs than larger organizations. But in the context of highly competitive global markets for goods, services, capital and people, large firms have advantages of scale. Governments at the Second Summit of the Americas made commitments to increase trade and market opportunities for micro-, small, and medium-sized enterprises.

Since 1994, Canada has been reviewing and upgrading its approach to addressing small-business issues, including those affecting self-employed persons — the segment of Canadians that experience the greatest barriers to sustained growth in the global economy. In response to changes in the economic environment, including the impact of information technology, connectedness and an opening of national trade, Canada has moved away from direct subsidies and market intervention toward creating conditions conducive to private-sector growth. Central to this approach is the recognition of the vital role that small business plays in the Canadian economy.

The Government of Canada recognizes that policy reforms are necessary for addressing the needs of small businesses in the new economy. The government relies on a wide array of policy levers, developed and implemented by a broad range of departments and agencies, to encourage small-business growth and development. Most financial and non-financial programs supporting small business focus on sectors, such as agri-food and Aboriginal businesses; or issues, such as trade and innovation. In contrast to a focus on sectors or issues, some policies and programs, such as Human Resources Development Canada's Self-Employment Benefit, targets a particular client group — the unemployed, who want to start their own business. The benefit provides participants with financial assistance in the form of income support for up to 52 weeks (up to 78 weeks for persons with disabilities), as well as opportunities for individuals to receive assistance from community organizations in developing business plans, counselling, coaching and ongoing technical support.

### Human Resources Development Canada

Some programs and policies, such as Human Resources Development Canada' s (HRDC) Self-Employment Benefit funded under the Employment Insurance (EI) program, fulfill both social and economic policy goals by helping unemployed Canadians find, obtain and maintain employment. The benefit helps eligible individuals to create jobs for themselves by starting a business. The financial assistance to clients is intended to cover their personal living expenses during the initial stages of their business start-up, not for investment in the business itself. Individuals may also have access to technical and consultative expertise to help them assess their business opportunities and prepare business plans. Finally, assistance may also be provided to cover all or part of the incremental costs of participation in the program, such as expenses relating to dependant care, disability needs, transportation and accommodation. Under HRDC's Opportunities Fund, similar self-employment assistance may be available to persons with disabilities who do not qualify for EI and who face disability-related barriers to employment or self-employment because of their disability.

**Industry Canada**

Industry Canada's Small Business Policy Branch is responsible for maintaining a strategic overview of Canadian small business, across regions and industry sectors, including assessing gaps and weaknesses in the marketplace, and advising government departments and agencies on their small business policies and programs. To fulfill this mandate, the Branch acts as a policy lead on small business issues in consultation with government departments and agencies.

To help create a positive environment in which Canadians can seize new business opportunities, Industry Canada also works in partnership with 13 federal departments and agencies to make up the Industry Portfolio. The Industry Portfolio, established in 1996, is designed to foster a positive business environment in which small and medium-sized enterprises can expand and establish stronger trading relationships worldwide.

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**Ensure that a significant number of the 50 million micro-, small- and medium-size enterprises in the hemisphere, whose owners and workers are persons with low incomes, especially women from these enterprises, have access to financial services by the year 2000.**

**Industry Canada**

Generally, small firms, particularly micro-enterprises, lack sufficient risk and operating capital, management skills and time to identify needs, evaluate options and implement operating plans. In order to support the growth of these firms, an improved understanding of the needs of micro-enterprises and the factors leading to their success is required. In 1999-2000, Industry Canada's Small Business Policy Branch began a research program focussing on micro-businesses. The survey of micro-enterprises is designed to provide baseline information about the factors leading to small-business success. Outputs will include:

- a profile of demographic and sector characteristics, including the proportion of those whose business goals are to expand;
- an indication of the business conditions and factors leading to the decision to expand the business; and
- cross-tabulations between indicators and the demographic and sector profiles.

Survey results will also be used to evaluate business and management skills. The survey will complement other research and consultations undertaken by Industry Canada to provide a clearer picture of the micro-enterprise sector.

Access to capital is vital to small businesses. To assist small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to access financial capital, Industry Canada, in partnership with Statistics Canada and the Department of Finance, is currently undertaking an SME Financing Data Initiative — comprehensive data collection and analysis covering the spectrum of financing instruments relevant to SMEs in Canada. This research consists of comprehensive baseline surveys that will identify a range of financing issues, as well as special studies that will provide more depth and targeted information on specific issues.

In partnership with the Aboriginal private sector, the federal government is implementing the Aboriginal Business Development Initiative (April 1999) in order to improve access to capital, create an Aboriginal business services network and enhance the delivery of existing business support programs to Aboriginal entrepreneurs and organizations. This Initiative is a co-operative effort between Industry Canada's Aboriginal Business Canada program, Canada Business Service Centres, the Federal Economic Development Initiative in Northern Ontario, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Canada Economic Development, Quebec and Western Economic Diversification Canada, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. The Access to Capital element of this Initiative has progressed significantly in only a year's time (1999-2000), resulting in the signing of some 50 agreements with more than 20 Aboriginal organizations to deliver funding and services to Aboriginal SMEs.

A number of public and private sector organizations in Canada offer micro-credit programs. Micro-credit refers to small loans (under $25 000) made to low-income individuals to sustain self-employment or to start up micro-businesses. A micro-loan fund is a pool of capital generated to support micro-enterprises, generally with alternative collateral guarantees. To help micro-enterprises access micro-credit, Industry Canada is developing a comprehensive national database of micro-credit providers. When complete, the database will be accessible within Industry Canada's Web site under Sources of Financing on Strategis at: http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/ and will provide SMEs with access to objective information on appropriate forms of public- and private-sector sources of debt and equity financing, including micro-credit. Sources of Financing thus aim to increase SMEs awareness of the financial options open to them by equipping them with a tool to find appropriate financing from a broad range of financial service providers.

The Government of Canada, through Industry Canada, also offers financial and non-financial services to specific segments of the small-business community, such as women.

### Status of Women Canada

Status of Women Canada began funding in 1999, through its Women's Program, an initiative carried out by l'Association féminine d'éducation et d'action sociale, to work with other government programs in creating links and partnerships with loan and financial institutions to develop a virtual fund that will provide venture capital for women to begin new businesses.

### Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Canadian women entrepreneurs lead over 700 000 firms (more than 30 percent of all businesses in Canada) and provide employment for 1.7 million Canadians. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and the Trade Research Coalition — an advisory board of public and private sector representatives established to quantify the importance of women business owners in Canada to export trade and to discover how women entrepreneurs successfully enter export markets — held an international celebration of Canadian women's business successes in both domestic and international markets on International Women's Day, March 8, 1999. Events were held in Canada in Vancouver, Calgary, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Montreal, Quebec City and Halifax, and in the United States in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. Employees at many government departments and agencies were invited to hear women in the private and public sectors speak on how they achieved success and on issues affecting women.

DFAIT has also taken steps to support businesswomen via a Businesswomen in Trade Web site (www.infoexport.gc.ca/businesswomen/about-e.asp). The interactive site provides information on how to prepare for and to succeed in the export marketplace, including direct links to other Internet sources and resources of interest to Canadian businesswomen. DFAIT also ensures that its trade promotion services are adapted to the needs of and fully accessible to women entrepreneurs in order to increase their successes in export markets.

In May 1999, the Canada-United States Business Women's Trade Summit took place with a focus on women business owners. The Summit attracted more than 150 Canadian and 150 American businesswomen within the SME community. It provided an opportunity to discuss trade impediments between the two countries as experienced by businesswomen, review the recommendations of the report *Beyond Borders: Canadian Businesswomen in International Trade*, and explore areas for future co-operation and new export business opportunities.

Since 1994, Team Canada trade missions have helped some 1800 Canadian businesses and organizations gain access to government and private-sector leaders worldwide, directly contributing to some $24.4 billion in new business. The 1998 Team Canada mission to Latin America was the largest ever Canadian trade mission, with about 80 percent of the participants from SMEs. To date, the 1998 mission has had the largest number of women entrepreneurs, a core delegation of Aboriginal entrepreneurs and a significant number of young entrepreneurs.

Team Canada missions build prestige and credibility for Canada, while helping new exporters, particularly small and medium-sized firms, to position themselves in very competitive markets. This is important as most new jobs in Canada are created by small businesses and only about 10 percent of small businesses are currently involved in international markets.

Team Canada trade missions provide an economical vehicle for participants to familiarize themselves with new markets; facilitate access to foreign political and business leaders; enhance visibility in foreign markets; help accelerate business deals to the contract closure stage; provide a venue to meet other Canadian companies active in the same or complementary markets; strengthen relationships with foreign business partners; and help develop relationships with new clients and counterparts.

### Canadian International Development Agency

In Bolivia, a sustainable urban development project of the Canadian International Development Agency aims to make urban planning respond as much to women's needs as to men's by ensuring that women receive an equitable share of training and participate in project activities. Specific activities to build women's earning capacity are also being implemented. In Peru, for instance, women have received credit to run their own businesses and have participated in local development projects with the support of a local development fund set up from the proceeds of Canadian export sales to that country.

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**Design and implement programs, with the support of the Inter-American Development Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean and in coordination with the World Bank and other development cooperation agencies, that promote appropriate financial policy reforms that: accelerate the entry of formal-sector financial institutions into this market; support the development of institutions that work in the sector; and eliminate impediments that limit the access of micro-, small- and medium-size enterprises to financial services.**

### Industry Canada

Industry Canada is addressing a number of small-business financing issues through the following organizations and initiatives:

Business Development Bank of Canada: This federally owned bank focusses on SMEs. The Bank is committed to filling marketplace gaps, particularly with respect to venture capital and addressing the needs of SMEs for smaller sized transactions.

Aboriginal Business Canada Program: This is an Industry Canada program that responds to the changing needs of Aboriginal businesses and contributes to the success of Aboriginal entrepreneurs and business organizations. The program provides business services and support to Canadian status and non-status Indians, Inuit, and Métis individuals, associations, partnerships or other legal entities that are majority-owned or controlled by Aboriginal people, on- or off-reserve.

Canada Community Investment Plan: This pilot program is designed to develop community expertise in attracting pools of risk capital available for investment in small businesses. The program will result in information and guidelines to help all Canadian communities develop investment facilitation services in support of local small businesses.

Steps to Growth Capital: As a second component of the Canada Community Investment Plan, Steps is an interactive Web site found at http://growth.ic.gc.ca/ for investment skills development. Steps provides detailed information on how entrepreneurs can evaluate their organization's investment readiness, address issues that concern potential investors, and prepare investment proposals that meet investor information needs.

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**Simplify and expedite the procedures for registration, obtaining licenses, complying with labour and tax regulations, and the formalisation, where appropriate, of SMEs.**

Since 1994, Canadian small businesses have identified the need to reduce the regulatory burden in order to improve business growth and development. To simplify regulatory requirements, tax collection, user fees and the information demands from government, the Government of Canada is moving to a more streamlined on-line service delivery. On January 1, 2001 Canada's Government On-Line strategy was launched to make business opportunities more readily accessible.

In addition, Canada's small business community has identified that too much of their time is spent completing various government forms. To address this issue, a follow-up to a 1995 study providing baseline data on federal information costs to SMEs — the Joint Forum on Paper Burden Reduction — is being undertaken in 2000-2001. The study will focus on regular, recurring information requirements such as payroll deductions, tax collection, records of employment, audits and surveys, and will look at the tender process for providing goods and services to the government. It will assess whether the Government of Canada is easing the burden of SMEs in the area of forms and surveys.

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**Support private-sector providers of non-financial services to enable them to expand access to new technologies and training for SMEs, which will permit them to enhance their competitiveness in national and global markets.**

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) is exploring new technologies and training models which could help SMEs adjust to a free trade environment. For example, DFAIT has signed memorandums of understanding (MoU) with Argentina and Chile to link SMEs within the context of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), to help SMEs to thrive within the changed trade environment and introduce Canadian SMEs to host country SMEs. As these MoUs enable governments to explore new mechanisms that could possibly integrate SMEs within the FTAA process, attention is being specifically targeted to enterprises owned by women and Aboriginal people. Indigenous to Indigenous training, for example would encourage in-country Indigenous training, technology-based products and services familiarization. Canada, along with Argentina and Chile, has already begun contemplating the implementation of the training sessions. Canada welcomed delegates from the countries party to the MoU in 1999 and 2000 and work is being done to link institutions in the partnering countries in order to develop a proposal for an Indigenous to Indigenous training session for 2001.

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**Promote partnerships of SMEs to allow them to take advantage of co operative assistance in doing business and in modernising business management.**

Through the Industry Portfolio, the Government of Canada has entered into various partnerships with regional organizations and development agencies. Together, they have invested over US$500 million in programs aimed at sustaining the growth of small businesses, including micro-enterprises. Industry portfolio agencies actively co-operate through policy and program analysis, the exchange of information through consultations, the development and delivery of programs and services and financial support.

By way of example, regional and economic agencies in Canada have programs targeted to the needs of SMEs in their respective regions and manage a network of enterprise-development corporations, including 252 community futures development corporations (CFDCs) in rural communities. CFDCs are federally funded, non-profit local development organizations run by volunteer boards of directors and salaried staff. CFDCs provide financial and non-financial support to small businesses and communities tailored to local needs. A typical CFDC has an annual operating budget of $200 000, a capital fund of $2.2 million, and a portfolio of 100 loans, with an average loan size of $24 000, all serving a rural population base of 35 000. CFDC loans are high-risk yet demonstrate low default rates (3 to 6 percent across all regions) due to careful risk analysis and strong local community support. Capital offered by CFDCs leverages $1.3 million in additional funds to rural areas.

Memorandums of understanding on international business development for small and medium-sized enterprises were signed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) in May 1999 with Argentina, and in November 1999 with Chile. The agreements are intended to strengthen and promote new and creative means of establishing commercial and technical co-operation with SMEs in the region. The MoUs are also designed to promote and accelerate exports of Canadian SME technology-based products, management knowledge and skills to our partners within the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

Through the MoU between DFAIT and the Corporación de Fomento de la Producción, a Chilean Economic Development Agency, and the Secretariat de Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas, Argentina's secretariat of small and medium-sized enterprises, Canada and its partnering countries have agreed to work together to develop a plan to achieve the following objectives:

- exchange best practices and knowledge to promote the international business activities of SMEs;
- develop effective mechanisms to increase exports to both countries;
- encourage joint ventures and strategic alliances between Canadian and Chilean SMEs;
- continue to promote the international business efforts of women- and Aboriginal-owned SMEs;
- develop opportunities for training and technology transfer programs; and
- encourage the participation of Canadian and Chilean entrepreneurs and officials in business events in both countries.

The MoUs with Chile and Argentina have the potential to bring great benefits to SMEs, including direct links to technology experts, buyers and suppliers; training and technology transfer programs; knowledge of business and industry sectors; and opportunities for partnerships and alliances.

Successful achievements in Argentina include:

- a businesswomen's trade mission to Canada in July 1999, followed in October 1999 by a delegation to the International Small Business Congress in Toronto (Canada);
- the New Exporters to South America mission and the Canadian delegation to the Women's Economic Summit of the Americas in November 1999;
- Secretariat de Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas support for Canada's first pilot project of the On-Line Trade Mission (developed by DFAIT to increase the effectiveness of SMEs participating in trade missions);
- a general co-operation agreement between the Women Business Owners of Canada and Fuerza Empresaria, an active Argentine women's business association; and
- several opportunities for collaboration over the coming year on technology-based products, management skills and SME infrastructure needs (identified in a recent visit by the Advisor to Secretariat de Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas).

In Chile, the MoU maximizes the involvement of Indigenous- and women-owned enterprises to the fullest extent possible. Work has been done to develop ties between a local businesswomen organization, the *Filial Chilena del* Women's World Banking (the Chilean association of women's world banking) and the Women Business Owners of Canada. Several profiles of export-ready Chilean women-owned enterprises have been received for business match-making and it is hoped that several companies will attend the next international women's conference in Canada, tentatively scheduled for 2001. On the Indigenous-owned business agenda, a group of Mapuche SME owners travelled to Canada, in July 2000. While in Canada, the delegation attended the Aboriginal Assembly of First Nations' NEXUS Business Conference and Trade Show. The visit represents a positive development toward connecting groups not traditionally part of our trade networks.

The Indigenous issue is of growing concern in South America and there has been significant interest from all parties to the MoU to explore Indigenous to Indigenous SME opportunities in the region.

Through DFAIT and Aboriginal Business Canada, a group of Aboriginal women from Canada travelled to New Zealand in June 1999 to participate in the first ever Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Indigenous Women in Exporting Business Seminar and the Women in APEC Conference/Women's Leaders Network. The Seminar provided an opportunity for Indigenous businesswomen interested in expanding their companies' exporting activities to network with other Indigenous women from around the world and for Aboriginal women to have a voice within APEC.

In 1997, Canada hosted the SME Ministers Meeting in Ottawa. At the meeting, the development of a training and certification program for small business counsellors was endorsed. This project will result in a standard for the practice of small business counselling recognized across the APEC region, and a comprehensive program of distance training leading to certification of individuals achieving that standard.

The APEC Small Business Counsellors (SBC) Program will benefit Latin American countries that are also members of APEC by providing them with the tools to establish their own cadre of qualified small business advisors. The program will also promote partnerships and encourage business growth in a liberalized global trading environment. Co-managed by Industry Canada's Small Business Policy Branch and the University of the Philippines, the project will result in a network of institutes and organizations qualified to implement the APEC SBC Program across the APEC region.

In addition to the above, the Canadian International Development Agency has a number of projects to support SMEs in developing countries. The Industrial Co-operation Program supports partnerships between Canadian private-sector enterprises and businesses in developing countries. In 1999-2000, some $10 million went to support such partnerships in the Americas. Projects supported have been in sectors such as hydroelectricity (Costa Rica), transportation (Argentina), forestry (Chile) and petroleum (Venezuela).

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**Promote inter-institutional coordination by creating effective interchange mechanisms between national and local public institutions that support SMEs and facilitating their links with the private sector.**

Canadian Business Service Centres focus on improving SME start-up, survival and growth rates by giving business people in every part of Canada access to accurate, timely and relevant information and referrals.

The International Business Opportunities Centre was established jointly by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and Industry Canada to match business leads provided by Canadian trade commissioners abroad with the business interests of Canadian firms, particularly SMEs. The Centre uses electronic databases such as DFAIT's WIN Exports and Industry Canada's Canadian Companies Capabilities to identify and engage Canadian companies in international business development opportunities. WIN Exports is a computer database listing some 23 000 Canadian exporters and their capabilities. It is used daily by trade commissioners to acquire information about Canadian exporters in order to respond quickly to prospective foreign buyers. Canadian Companies Capabilities is an on-line Internet database with information on thousands of Canadian businesses and over 200 000 products and services. The site connects buyers and distributors and permits businesses to find supply sources, partners, agents, joint venture products and other useful information.

The Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) is a Canadian Crown Corporation that promotes the creation and development of SMEs by providing specialized financing and a wide range of business counselling, training and mentoring programs. For exporters, BDC's support is designed to meet the needs of businesses preparing first-time forays into foreign markets as well as those already exporting. BDC also offers a range of financial programs and services including:

- the Cultural Industries Development Fund;
- growth capital for Aboriginal businesses;
- innovation loans;
- the Micro Business Program;
- Productivity Plus Loans;
- seed capital;
- the Student Business Loans Program;
- term loans;
- the Tourism Investment Fund;
- venture loans;
- venture capital;
- working capital; and
- the Young Entrepreneur Financing Program.

In addition are consulting programs and services including:

- business management solutions;
- export counselling;
- the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Food Safety System;
- ISO certification assistance;
- the New Exporters Training and Counselling Program; and
- strategic planning.

Furthermore, the BDC STEP-UP program combines one-on-one mentoring by experienced business owners for women with newly established businesses; training workshops that include a focus on auditing, marketing, finance, expansion; and networking roundtables. The BDC also has a STEP-IN program, a training, counselling and mentoring program to assist women to plan and start their own businesses.

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**Request that regional organisations and Government, multilateral, and bilateral development agencies involved in the Region assist in policy reform and invest between US$400-$500 million over the next three years in programs, including training and technical assistance, that support the actions identified in the Plan of Action.**

The government of Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), has invested over $40 million in programs that provide training, technical assistance and greater business opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprise development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

### Canadian International Development Agency

For example, CIDA supports, through a $500 000 project, the work of McGill University with the Argentinean Association of Coastal Organizations for Dairy Control to help ensure the sustainability of the dairy sector in Santa Fe (Argentina), which is challenged by the competitive environment of Mercosur (known as the Southern Common Market — the fastest growing trading bloc in the world) and the globalized economy. The project seeks to enhance the capacity of small producers and producer organizations in dairy production and helps them in defining dairy-related policies and standards.

Through a $760 000 project, CIDA is helping the Quiindy Co-operative in Paraguay to increase its agricultural production through the transfer of Canadian know-how in the production, grading, and marketing of agricultural products. The adoption of Canadian methods will ensure better quality control of the fruits and vegetables produced, which in turn should improve sales and increase income.

CIDA also supports SME development through its $8 million socioeconomic reactivation project in Guatemala. The project supports the strengthening of social and economic infrastructure in selected municipalities in one of the ex-conflict zones, San Marcos. The project works with municipal authorities and local organizations to identify and implement social and economic projects in association with Guatemala's Social Investment Fund and Peace Fund.

CIDA is assisting in the development of micro-enterprises in Jamaica with a $3 million project to support equitable economic development in Jamaica. The purpose is to provide equitable access to credit by supporting the development of a self-sustaining organization which will be focussed on lending to Jamaican micro-entrepreneurs who have no collateral. The project will also look to create solidarity groups among participating micro-enterprises.

In Haiti, CIDA is currently involved in two initiatives to support co-operative development as well as SME support. First, a $3.1 million project to support the creation of credit/saving co-operatives. Since inception in 1998, approximately 60 co-operatives have opened their doors to give populations and SMEs access to financing. Second, a $2.6 million project to help create and consolidate agricultural co-operatives in the country was also established in 1998. Since the inception of the project, 14 such co-operatives are now opened, offering services to agricultural micro and SMEs.

## PROPERTY REGISTRATION

At the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas, leaders recognized that facilitating the provision of legal title to urban and rural properties was an integral part of moving toward a more prosperous future for all.

The Government of Canada recognizes the significance of property registry systems and has endeavoured to establish just and equitable property registration procedures in Canada. The summary below describes property registration systems in Canada as they relate to the Santiago Action Plan.

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**Streamline and decentralise property registration procedures by: adopting simplified procedures for titling and registration; disseminating information regrading these procedures; utilising state new technologies for property georeferencing, computer-generated mapping and computerised records storage; incorporating alternative dispute resolution mechanisms; and avoiding overlapping administrative fees for titling and registration.**

As described under the *Constitution Act, 1867* the legislature of each province of Canada has exclusive jurisdiction over laws related to Property and Civil Rights in that province. This jurisdiction includes the creation of property rights, their transfer and their general characteristics, the law of landlord and tenant, trusts, wills, succession, conveyancing, and land-use planning.

The term real property for the provinces using common law (all Canadian provinces except the province of Quebec which uses civil law) means land, including mines and minerals, buildings and structures, improvements and other fixtures on, above or below the surface of the land. One of the basic principles of real property law is that a seller cannot confer a greater title than that which he or she holds. Accordingly, each of Canada's common law provinces has a registration system that determines the ordering of rights and assists a seller in demonstrating a valid title on sale.

Land titles statutes in the western Canadian provinces and in Ontario are based on a title registration system. All of these except British Columbia (B.C.) are based on an interest recording system. B.C.'s system confers not only priority but also a refutable presumption of ownership. All of the statutes contain elements of the common-law system and include compensation systems for losses due to any glitches in the registration systems.

For example, the land titles systems in B.C. and Ontario are based on the concept of title. The systems allow an unlimited number of claims over the same tract of land and facilitate the registration of the substantive rights under the common law of real property. Although the land titles systems are all based on the principle of priority, they also facilitate private dealings and tend to reduce the costs of property transactions.

B.C.'s *Land Titles Act* is based on a land titles registration system that was developed in South Australia in 1858. The system was adopted in the western provinces of Canada to promote the facility of transfer, allowing for simplicity, speed, and reduced conveyancing costs. An integral element of this system is insurance, with a fund for providing compensation in the case of system errors.

In 1998, the Ontario Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations announced that the province would convert to an electronic system of land titles registration. It is intended that instruments dealing with interests in land such as deeds, leases, mortgages, discharges of mortgages and easements be created, signed, transmitted, and registered electronically.

Property registration in the Canadian territories has been devolved to the territorial governments. This includes the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and the Yukon. Computerized systems for administering temporary land interests (such as land-use permits and mineral claims) are being used by the regional offices of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). Under the *Indian Act*, INAC is also responsible for property registration services to Indigenous people living on reserves and to non-Indigenous people leasing land on those reserves.

In 1999, the *First Nations Land Management Act* came into effect, providing for First Nations communities who want to democratically establish their own land management code and enact laws, outside the *Indian Act*, governing such matters as interests in land, and the development, conservation, protection, management, use and possession of First Nation reserve land.

The Geological Survey of Canada and Geomatics Canada, both components of the Earth Sciences Sector of Natural Resources Canada, have taken the lead in using new technologies for property geo-referencing in Canada. The Geological Survey of Canada has been acquiring and processing digital airborne and other geo-science data for many years and has helped Canada become a leader in the field of computer-generated mapping and computerized records. A number of years of research by the Canada Centre for Remote Sensing, a part of Geomatics Canada, related to the acquisition and enhancement of airborne and satellite data, has also been instrumental in helping Canada and the Canadian industry to streamline and facilitate property registration.

Internationally, the Canadian International Development Agency is working with the Government of Peru to help decentralize property registration procedures. A $4.5 million project is currently underway to assist the Peruvian Ministry of Energy and Mines in mines safety, environmental management and in improving social benefits from mineral resources development and extraction to reduce poverty. This project, focusses on medium-sized underground operations and includes assistance to the Ministry in mine titling.

**In accord with national legal frameworks, implement measures to protect the rights accorded to Indigenous populations, supply information programs, if needed, to assure greater awareness of Indigenous populations of their rights in this respect.**

The *First Nations Land Management Act*, which received Royal Assent in June 1999, enables 14 First Nations to opt out of the land managements sections of the *Indian Act* and establish their own regime to manage their lands and resources. For those groups with a land base, Indigenous self-government arrangements can include land management and property registration. Where treaty or other legal means have not previously dealt with Aboriginal rights and title, Aboriginal or Indigenous groups can negotiate comprehensive claims agreements. These agreements define a wide range of rights and benefits, that may include full ownership of certain lands, guaranteed wildlife harvesting rights, and participation in land and resource management. The final agreements contain details on land title and property registration. Self-government and claims negotiations are underway with Indigenous groups across Canada.

The establishment of the territory of Nunavut, on April 1, 1999, was the outcome of comprehensive land claims and governmental arrangements resulting in Government of Canada legislation. Nunavut comprises one fifth of Canada's territory and a large percentage of its population is Inuit. The new territorial government is building its capacity and once systems and personnel are in place, will assume its property registration functions, which are currently being managed by the Northwest Territories.

## HEALTH TECHNOLOGIES

At the Santiago Summit of the Americas, governments affirmed the importance of enhancing the quality of life for all peoples.

**Seek, through public and private efforts, or partnerships between them, to enhance the availability, access to, and quality of drugs and vaccines, especially for the most needy, by promoting efforts to safeguard the quality, rational selection and use, safety and efficacy of pharmaceutical products, with special emphasis on vital and essential drugs; and by supporting regional initiatives that by the year 2002 will facilitate research, development, production and utilisation of vaccines, which will reduce the incidence of diseases, such as pneumonia, meningitis, measles, rubella and mumps.**

### Health Canada

Health Canada, through the National Laboratory for Enteric Pathogens (NLEP) at the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg, Manitoba provides training in 20 Latin American and Caribbean countries in the use of techniques to identify various enteric pathogens and to determine emerging resistance to antibiotics. The NLEP also conducts quality-control and assurance programs with partner countries. These kinds of training and enhancement programs enable countries to protect the health of their citizens by identifying pathogens in a timely manner and assist in prescribing appropriate and effective treatments.

The new Canadian Strategy on HIV/AIDS was launched by the Minister of Health in May 1998, committing $42.2 million annually to the fight against HIV/AIDS. The Strategy grew out of extensive consultations with volunteer and community groups, First Nations and Inuit organizations, researchers, the private sector, professional associations, health and social care providers and governments, and most importantly, with individual Canadians living with HIV/AIDS.

The Strategy also provides funding to the international collaboration component, which focusses on improving the capacity of Canadians to act globally against the HIV/AIDS epidemic; expanding information-sharing and knowledge in Canada concerning the global context of HIV/AIDS; and assisting in the co-ordination of the Canadian government and community involvement in the international response to HIV/AIDS. The Working Group on International HIV/AIDS Issues was created through the international collaboration component of the Strategy, and through this mechanism, works with the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network to address human rights issues of HIV/AIDS-affected and infected people around the world.

Health Canada works in collaboration with the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network to safeguard the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, and is currently researching concerns such as testing and confidentiality, prostitution, prison health care, access to treatment and forms of discrimination against HIV/AIDS-infected people.

### Canadian International Development Agency

Since 1996, Canada has increased its program funding to $18 million to help developing countries combat tuberculosis. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) supports national tuberculosis control programs in Ecuador, Haiti and Peru. These programs include Directly Observed Treatment Short-Course (DOTS), an approach that treats patients over a six-month period with inexpensive, readily available drugs. Trained health workers or volunteers visit patients daily to observe them taking their medication. This monitoring is critical to the treatment's success.

As part of CIDA's Immunization Initiative, announced in 1999, $3 million has been contributed to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) for immunisation projects. Of this amount, $1.5 million has been allocated to *SIREVA II*, an epidemiology- and laboratory-strengthening project that supports the development of a Regional System for Vaccines in the Americas, which will develop a sustainable laboratory-based surveillance network and the epidemiological capacity necessary to produce vaccines against respiratory infections in children. Computer technology is used to gather and analyze national and regional data, to provide training and distance education, and to share learning. The surveillance system has been so successful that it has attracted other international donors and is being seen as a model to replicate outside of Latin America.

PAHO's Measles Eradication Strateg y will receive $1 million. The plan calls for the eradication of measles in the Americas by the year 2000. Under the Strategy, PAHO is supporting member countries in achieving high rates of vaccination against measles, strengthening surveillance systems, improving laboratory diagnosis, and rapidly responding to measles outbreaks. The 1999 meeting of the First Spouses of the Americas, hosted in Ottawa (Canada), reaffirmed the commitment of participants to the eradication of measles in the Americas region. Since that time, CIDA has developed four social-development priorities for the agency, and one of these is basic health, including immunization. CIDA's annual investment in bilateral health projects in the Americas will double over the next five years, reaching about $87 million.

Finally, $500 000 was provided to help PAHO to rebuild the vaccine cold chain programs and $500 000 to access critical drugs in those Central American countries most affected by Hurricane Mitch — El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras. The cold chain is the process of transporting and storing vaccines within the safe temperature range of two to eight degrees Celsius from the place of manufacture to the point of administration. The support to the cold chain programs led to the re-establishment in 2000 of continued routine immunization programs, as well as assistance with campaigns to combat dengue.

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**Strengthen and improve existing national and regional networks of health information and surveillance systems, so that stakeholders have access to data to address critical health issues in the Region, in order to make appropriate clinical and managerial decisions. They will address the development, implementation and evaluation of needs-based health information systems and technology, including telecommunications, to support epidemiological surveillance, the operation and management of health services and programs, health education and promotion, tele-medicine, computer networks and investment in new health technologies.**

### Health Canada

The development of a Canadian health information infrastructure is part of the Government of Canada's overall strategy to renew the health system and to put Canada in the forefront of an emerging global knowledge-based society. Health information and applications are among the fastest growing sectors of activity on Canada's Information Highway. The Information Highway is a combination of federal initiatives designed to prepare Canadians for the digital world. In September 2000, the Canadian government announced that it will invest $500 million to accelerate the development of modern information systems, such as electronic patient records, to provide better health care.

Health Canada is working closely with provincial and territorial partners in building the Canadian Health Infostructure. Work is underway to develop national strategies aimed at enhancing the utility and use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the health sector. Five key priorities have been identified for work: strategic planning, tele-health, electronic health records, protection of personal health information, and health surveillance.

Policy development in regard to privacy, confidentiality and security issues is a critical challenge in developing the Infostructure. Privacy protection in Canada is a shared responsibility between the federal and provincial/territorial governments. In order to resolve this issue in health care, there is a need to ensure consistency of legislative and policy protection of personal health information across Canada.

To encourage innovation and investment, Health Canada developed two new programs. The goal is to connect Canadians to timely, credible, and accessible health needs and teach them how to stay healthy and prevent disease.

The Canada Health Infostructure Partnerships Program (CHIPP) is a two-year incentive program, aimed at supporting the implementation of innovative applications of information and communications technologies to bring better health and health services to Canadians. CHIPP will support projects in two strategic areas of ICT-based innovations in health care delivery, namely tele-health (tele-medicine and tele-home care) and electronic health records. CHIPP encourages sharing and collaboration across jurisdictions. It will support large national or regional implementation models, preferably involving several jurisdictions working together to achieve common objectives. It will also support smaller projects with the potential to evolve into large implementation models.

The Canada Health Infostructure Support Program, completed in 2000, supports trial, demonstration or pilot projects aimed at proving, evaluating, or raising the level of awareness of advanced network-based services in areas such as public health, health surveillance, First Nations health, population health information, pharmacare, home care and tele-health. With this program, the Government of Canada encourages the health sector to use ICT, and to further test and assess the use of new information technologies in their domain.

The Canadian Health Network (CHN) is a new and growing network, providing access to the resources of leading Canadian health organizations and international health information providers. It features 26 Health Canada programs with links to more than 6000 Internationally based projects.

Now part of the CHN, the Canadian Women's Health Network (CWHN) was officially launched in May 1993 by women representing more than 70 organizations from across the country. The CWHN is a network of individuals, groups, organizations and institutions concerned with women's health issues. The CWHN works with the Centres of Excellence for Women's Health Program, funded by Health Canada, to further promote communication, information sharing and interaction among all interested groups and individuals. Health Canada is a member of the CWHN.

In 1999, Health Canada set up an advisory committee on women's health surveillance to provide advice on issues, priorities, methodologies and potential partnerships in matters of women's health surveillance. The Committee drafted a report recommending enhanced surveillance in the areas of cancer, abortion services, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and tobacco, and the development of new surveillance systems for musculo-skeletal disorders, mental health and violence.

### Canadian International Development Agency

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) supports a number of countries seeking to improve their health information and surveillance systems.

For example, the Agency is investing $900 000 over four years (1998-2002) in the Health Promotion in Action project in Brazil. The project will focus on Canadian know-how, strategies and best practices in the area of health promotion. In addition to this, several new projects have been approved, including a three-year project ($500 000) to strengthen Chile's National Health

Promotion Plan (University of Toronto's Centre for Health Promotion). The Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC) received $4.1 million from CIDA from 1996 to 2000 to help 12 Caribbean countries respond effectively to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The five-year project sought to reduce the rate of transmission, morbidity and mortality, and the social and economic impact of HIV/AIDS. It is appropriate to highlight the development of national HIV/AIDS control programs in most countries as well as the input from civil society in the elaboration and implementation of these national plans. Surveillance capacities have also increased. CIDA will also contribute $8 million to support CAREC for the implementation of its Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of the HIV Epidemic in the Caribbean (2001-2005) — derived from the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) Caribbean Regional Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS and the Caribbean Co-operation in Health II. As one of CIDA's new social development priorities, HIV/AIDS in the Americas will receive funding totalling some $17 million from 2000 to 2004.

In response to a request from Ecuador's Ministry of Health, CIDA is currently initiating a $1.7 million project through the Canadian Lung Association. The objective is to strengthen the country's national tuberculosis prevention efforts and its laboratory network, and to increase community participation and awareness.

Further, CIDA has been supporting a $3.9 million Caribbean HIV/AIDS project since 1996. The project is being implemented through the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre, a regional office of the Pan American Health Organization, and is assisting the health ministries of 12 Caribbean countries in the implementation of their own national HIV/AIDS plans. The project focusses on strengthening national action plans to address HIV/AIDS, including the diagnosis and care of those affected.

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**Develop initiatives designed to reduce deficits in access to and quality of drinking water, basic sanitation and solid waste management, with special emphasis on rural and poor urban areas, by applying existing technologies or developing new, appropriate and effective low-cost technologies.**

In Canada, responsibility for the provision of safe drinking water is shared between the various levels of government. For the federal government, Health Canada has a leadership role to develop risk assessments for the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality. Health Canada is also the technical secretariat for the Federal-Provincial Subcommittee on Drinking Water, which is responsible for the establishment and publication of the Guidelines. The provinces and territories then use these guidelines as a basis to establish their own enforceable objectives, standards or regulations. But the development and establishment of guidelines or regulations is not sufficient to ensure the safety of drinking water. Enforcement of these limits is paramount, as is the protection of water at the source and the disinfection of drinking water within the distribution system. Failure in any of these areas can pose serious threats to human health. Information on drinking water activities in Canada can be found on Health Canada's Water Quality Program's Web site (www.hc-sc.gc.ca/waterquality).

Access to potable water is one of the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) main concerns. As it is considered a basic human need, CIDA projects seek to secure a safe drinking water supply through:

– low-cost technologies such as hand pumps, wells, boreholes, gravity-fed systems and rainwater collection;

– the creation of storage tanks in rural and peri-urban areas;

– water treatment systems for preventing or eliminating contamination; and

– improvements in sanitation and the elimination of health concerns (through the control of transmission routes through drainage).

In 1998, CIDA initiated a $6.2 million, six-year project to improve water supply and basic sanitation in Nicaragua. The project is designed to supply the people of Bluefields with an appropriate level of potable water, and sanitation services that are reliable, affordable and financially self-sustaining. The project is progressing with considerable emphasis placed on gender equality and community health promotion.

In Honduras, CIDA is financing a $4.2 million project to ensure access, quality and reliability of potable water facilities and improved sanitation services. This is in part being achieved through community-based training. The project is so successful that it has been used as a model for other donors in the region.

As part of an $8.8 million project in Peru, World University Service of Canada (WUSC), funded by CIDA, is working with neighbourhoods and local authorities in Lima and seven other municipalities on capacity building and installation of water and sewage systems. With CIDA's support, WUSC provides technical assistance to design and install the systems, as well as workshops in home plumbing, health and hygiene, and community organization.

In addition to these projects, a $3.2 million integrated water, sanitation and basic health project in Nicaragua is being developed by the Miskito Indians of Nicaragua and the Meadow Lake Tribal Council of Canada.

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**Make every effort to ensure that the necessary resources are allocated for the development of the lines of action of this Plan, with the technical support of the Pan American Health Organisation. They also will promote bilateral and multilateral collaboration, and will request the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, and other financial and technical cooperation institutions to support the programs and activities included in this initiative, according to their own specific priorities and fields of action.**

### Health Canada

The Government of Canada works in partnership with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in support of health-related activities. The PAHO technical representative in Canada is the Canadian Society for International Health, a national member-directed non-governmental organization with a mandate to raise the profile of the PAHO in Canada and promote and facilitate collaborative opportunities for Canadians in health and development issues in the Americas.

In terms of promoting bilateral collaboration, Health Canada experts visited Argentina in March 1999 to explain how the Canadian health system is financed and administered. The provision of universal and equitable health insurance in Canada was the main topic of discussion. Also reviewed were the roles of the Canadian federal and provincial/territorial governments in sharing responsibility for health issues; and the ways in which health technologies are improving health services. A delegation of provincial Argentine ministers of health travelled to Canada in May 2000 to examine mechanisms of decentralisation and the roles of responsibilities of federal and provincial governments in the financing and delivery of health services.

A Canadian delegation comprised of representatives from Health Canada, provincial centres of excellence on women's health, and a World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization collaborating centre, spent a week in Costa Rica in Spring 2000 providing information on Canada's gender health policies. This trip lead to a two-year project planned for 2001-2002 using Canadian advice and direction on the development of health-based gender policies in government.

Technical expertise is being provided to the Government of St. Lucia to establish programs that address violence against women and offer shelter for abused women.

With Mexico, Health Canada has engaged in the exchange of experts on issues associated with the provision of care to an aging population. Two exchanges have taken place and a plan of action has been developed to address issues associated with long-term care facilities, aging-related diseases and healthy aging/health promotion programs.

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**Develop mechanism for evaluating the relevance, cost and efficacy of the technologies introduced to deal with these and other related health problems.**

**Health Canada**

At the Ninth Conference of Spouses of Heads of State and Government of the Americas held in Ottawa (Canada) in fall 1999, Health Canada made a presentation on the use of tele-health technologies and produced a video in English, Spanish and French demonstrating how tele-health technologies are breaking down barriers of distance, access and cost to health. Tele-health is one of the main growth areas of health technologies innovations in Canada and the Hemisphere.

Health Canada launched in 1999 an Internet program entitled the Global Public Health Intelligence Network. The Network is a unique international warning system for the early detection and validation of health risks and other public health issues and is currently focussing on over 30 communicable diseases and will soon introduce an intelligent search engine, and expand the system to other fields such as food and water safety, environmental health, and the health impacts of natural disasters. Health Canada's Laboratory Centre for Disease Control and the World Health Organization are working together on this pilot project.

## WOMEN

Gender equality is an important part of the Summit of the Americas process. To further strengthen the role of women in the political, social and economic spheres, governments pledged to undertake a number of actions at the 1998 Santiago Summit.

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**Strengthen and establish, where they do not exist, national mechanisms and governmental organs, as well as the respective regional and subregional networks in charge of promoting legal equality and equality of opportunities between women and men, focussed on gender equity, and provide them with adequate and timely financial resources to enable these entities to promote, coordinate and carry out the commitments undertaken by the States at the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit on Social Development, the Summit of the Americas, the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the recent Santiago Consensus of the VII Regional Conference on Beijing Follow-up.**

Canada is committed to advancing gender equality and women's human rights through our international activities. Canada's promotion of gender equality is based on a belief that equal rights for women are an essential component of progress on human rights and democratic development; and that sustainable and equitable development will only be achieved if women are able to participate as equal partners and decision makers in, and beneficiaries of, the sustainable development of their societies.

Canada supports efforts of international organizations to develop and implement policies and programs related to gender equality and to integrate a gender perspective into their work. Examples include the United Nations Economic and Social Council's adoption of agreed conclusions on gender mainstreaming; and mainstreaming efforts underway at the Commonwealth, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum.

Canada believes that a strong and effective Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) is essential for the promotion of gender equality objectives in the Hemisphere. In collaboration with Mexico and Peru, Canada took the lead on a resolution on the Status of Women in the Americas and Strengthening and Modernization of the Inter-American Commission of Women at the 29th General Assembly of the OAS with the goal of improving the CIM's linkages with other hemispheric entities and making the CIM more strategic in its work. This was complemented by a Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade led resolution on increasing the Appointment of Women to Senior Management positions at the OAS with the objective that women will occupy 50 percent of all posts by the year 2005.

### Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) promoted the human rights of women in the follow-up to and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action. In the ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1998-2002, DFAIT helped to strengthen language on the importance of measures to integrate women's human rights throughout the UN system, drawing on past Commission on Human Rights (CHR) resolutions; and to recognize the importance of system-wide co-operation in efforts to eliminate violence against women, including ensuring follow-up to the recommendations of the CHR Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences.

As part of the Vienna + 5 process, DFAIT provided funding for a global non-governmental organizations forum on human rights in Ottawa (Canada). The forum brought together 250 representatives from 150 civil society and Indigenous peoples groups to assess the overall situation of human rights. The meeting focussed on a number of themes, including women's human rights.

At the United Nations, Canada has supported a number of initiatives on gender mainstreaming, including drafting a consensus resolution at the Commission on the Status of Women in 1997 on gender mainstreaming in all policies and programs in the UN system. DFAIT has also worked to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in bodies of the UN that have not traditionally addressed these concerns, including for example the Security Council. Canada has also taken the lead with Australia and New Zealand on a long-standing resolution at both the General Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women, which encourages improvement of the status of women in the UN Secretariat by such things as achieving 50/50 gender balance.

### Status of Women Canada

Status of Women Canada (SWC) produced a paper in 1999 entitled *Canadian Experience in Gender Mainstreaming*, outlining the Government of Canada's experience with gender mainstreaming. The paper reviews the current environment for undertaking gender-based analysis within the federal government, highlighting the aspects that are seen as particularly important in establishing an enabling environment. It then presents two case studies of developments in policy areas that illustrate the complexity of undertaking effective gender-based analysis and influencing decision-making processes. Finally, the paper examines some challenges and next steps in achieving a more systematic, cross-sectoral approach to policy making in support of gender equality.

Internationally, SWC is actively engaged in ministerial-level and other meetings of the Organization of American States, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, the Commonwealth, La Francophonie and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. The meetings are helping to advance common gender equality objectives and to promote gender-based analysis practices within these international forums.

Canada is actively involved in the development of new mandates and plans of action in these organizations for the promotion of gender equality and the integration of gender perspectives in policy development, including for example the Inter-American Program on Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality.

With support from SWC, in November 1998 the Metro Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children in conjunction with the International Women's Rights Project of York University's Centre for Refugee Studies, organized a meeting on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). More than 40 NGO representatives from across Canada, government officials and academics attended the meeting, which contributed to an increased understanding of CEDAW by ensuring an open dialogue on the achievements of this UN Convention and how it can be more effectively utilized to advance equality for women. Practical measures were identified to improve the reporting and monitoring processes to be used by NGOs, academics and governments. Discussions focussed on the development of more effective strategies for using CEDAW and its optional protocol. Participants at the meeting commented on a draft report being prepared by Canada and made a further contribution to a pilot CEDAW impact study carried out in six countries. The final report of the pilot study was presented to the CEDAW Committee in New York (United States) in January 1999.

SWC also co-funded the Inter-American Workshop on Intellectual Property Rights for Indigenous Women, held in Ottawa in April 1999 with participation by Indigenous women from 20 countries. The workshop was convened by the Indigenous Women of the Americas, an international organization established on the initiative of Canadian indigenous women's organizations, to improve the socio-economic and legal situation of Aboriginal women in the Americas.

Funding and assistance have been made available to women's studies and researchers to develop indicators and research methodologies to strengthen gender-based analysis and to ensure follow-up to Canada's international commitments on gender equality. In addition, SWC works with a coalition of NGOs that monitors Canada's international commitments on gender equality.

### Canadian International Development Agency

Canada's Gender Equality Funds are guided by the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) Policy on Gender Equality, updated in March 1999, and aimed at supporting equality between women and men through:

- the advancement of women's equal participation with men as decision makers;
- the support to women and girls in the realization of their full human rights; and
- the reduction of gender inequalities in access to and control over the resources and benefits of development.

Since 1998, some $24 million has been directed to implementing various international commitments made in the areas of poverty reduction; violence; participation in political, economic and social processes; economic empowerment; health; and education. Funding is allocated in support of strategic interventions by government and civil society organizations to address the inequality between women and men. Specific areas of focus include violence against women, women's political participation and labour force discrimination against women.

Support from the Gender Equality Funds has increased the political participation and representation of women in elections in six regions of Colombia. In Paraguay, a domestic violence program is supporting new legislation on this issue, the training of police and judicial officials, and safe houses and improved health care for victims of domestic violence. In Brazil and Trinidad and Tobago, legal reforms for the protection of working women have been made, while in Nicaragua, the economic and living conditions of rural women have been improved.

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**Examine the existing laws and their implementation in order to identify obstacles limiting the full participation of women in the political, economic, social and cultural life of our countries. Whenever necessary, promote reforms or create new laws to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and to guarantee the protection of children's rights.**

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees equality to all individuals without discrimination based on sex, race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, disability or other, or on grounds such as sexual orientation. It also protects laws, programs or activities that have as their objective, the improvement of conditions of the disadvantaged. In addition to the Charter, federal and provincial/territorial human rights legislation prohibits discrimination. The *Employment Equity Act* and the *Canada Labour Code*, also contain provisions that support equality in the workplace. In 1998, the Canadian Human Rights Commission, in co-operation with Human Resources Development Canada and Status of Women Canada (SWC), prepared model harassment policies for the workplace. Two policies were developed: one for small employers and one for medium-sized and large employers.

With funding from SWC in 1999, the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund undertook an outreach initiative to increase awareness, understanding and education about substantive equality issues surrounding the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The initiative included the preparation and dissemination of materials to educate the general public and target audiences about women's quality issues and equality litigation.

Since 1995, as part of its Federal Plan for Gender Equality, the Government has passed several key pieces of legislation that strengthen the criminal justice system's capacity to address violence against women and children including:

- restrictions on the ownership and use of firearms;

- limits to the defence of extreme self-induced intoxication;

- strengthening existing criminal legislative provisions relating to violence against women and children;

- more effective peace bonds (protective court orders);

- provisions for longer sentences for crimes considered to be motivated by hate based on sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or violence against one's spouse or children and other characteristics;

- strengthening the sentencing and correctional regime for high-risk offenders, especially those previously convicted of sex offences and other violent offences;

- measures to allow Canadian prosecution against Canadians travelling abroad for the sexual exploitation of children;

- strengthening the prohibition of the practice of female genital mutilation;

- restrictions on the eligibility for parole of certain inmates serving life sentences; and

- restrictions on the production of confidential records of witnesses to the defence and complainants in sexual assault proceedings.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade works actively at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) and the United Nations General Assembly to support resolutions calling for the elimination of violence against women including the girl child; recognizing violence against women as a violation of the human rights of women; and the elimination of traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, including female genital mutilation. As a result of a Canadian-led resolution at the UNCHR in 1994, a Special Rapporteur was appointed to seek and receive information on violence against women, to recommend measures to eliminate violence against women and its causes, and to remedy its consequences. The Rapporteur is currently in her third term and support for this Canadian-led initiative is increasing with over 70 co-sponsors from all regional groups.

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**Implement and follow up on the commitments regarding the status of women as agreed to at the Summit of the Americas, with the support of the Inter-American Commission on Women, in collaboration with civil society, with the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, United Nations Economic Commission on Latin-America and the Caribbean, and other entities of international cooperation, using when appropriate the System of Indicators adopted by the countries of the Americas at Montelimar, Nicaragua.**

Within the Canadian federal government, Status of Women Canada (SWC) has been conducting gender-based analysis since 1976. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) similarly adopted gender-based analysis as a factor in the development process more than ten years ago.

In March 1998, SWC sponsored an international symposium on economic gender equality indicators as a way to stimulate public policy discussion on indicators and contribute to international work in this area. In 1999, SWC, along with provincial and territorial governments developed and published a set of key benchmarks in a document entitled, *Economic Gender Equality Indicators* which are currently being updated.

CIDA has also developed a guide to gender sensitive indicators with an accompanying project-level handbook. Through its locally managed funds in Central America, South America and the Caribbean, CIDA is also working to increase women's participation and role in the economic, political and social life of their communities, countries and regions.

As a means of increasing understanding and use of gender-based analysis across government, SWC created the Gender-Based Analysis Directorate to generate capacity-building mechanisms to assist other federal departments and agencies in creating their own processes to ensure that gender-based analysis is incorporated into all of their policy and program development activities. Specific actions that are presently being pursued include:

- working with departments to create action plans to integrate gender-based analysis in their work;
- developing training modules for departments and other interested parties;
- establishing accountability and evaluative processes to assess progress made;
- building a resource library, developing further reference materials and tools for the use of departments, and encouraging them to develop and use their own sectoral tools; and
- establishing appropriate interdepartmental mechanisms to advance implementation.

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**Promote policies designed to improve women's health conditions and the quality of health services at every stage of their lives.**

### Status of Women Canada

Status of Women Canada provides financial support to non-governmental organizations for research initiatives designed to increase awareness and community support for the overall health and well-being of women, for example, a participatory research project by the Positive Women's Network (January 1999 to July 1999) that addressed how economics, power in intimate relationships and control over health issues affect women's risk for HIV infection and illness progression in the Vancouver area.

## Health Canada

As stated in the Federal Plan for Gender Equality, the Government of Canada is committed to developing a comprehensive and integrated health strategy for women. In March 1999, the Women's Health Strategy was launched as a framework to help Health Canada address biases and inequities in the health system. The 1999 Budget allotted $65 million to set up and support the Canadian Institutes of Health Research during their initial year of operation. As part of this initiative, the Gender and Health Institute was established to conduct research on women's health issues.

The 1999 Budget also allocated $25 million to support the new Canadian Nursing Research Fund. The Fund finances research on critical issues related to nursing and health care delivery. The fund is supporting nursing research chairs, training, research on policy and management and knowledge dissemination.

In 1999, the Government of Canada also announced key steps to expand programs under the Canada Pre-Natal Nutrition Program (CPNP). Introduced in 1994, the CPNP aims to improve the health and birth outcomes of high-risk pregnant women with a focus on nutrition, breastfeeding, and support during the infant's first year. By increasing the resources for the 280 current projects across Canada and the 400 projects in First Nation and Inuit communities, and by further expanding the CPNP, the number of women served by the Program will grow from some 20 000 to 35 000 per year. Existing joint management agreements with each province and territory and with First Nations and Inuit communities will continue to direct the Program. As part of the CPNP, the Government of Canada will increase its efforts to prevent fetal alcohol syndrome and effects through enhanced investments to support prevention, public education and co-operation with provincial and territorial governments, First Nations and Inuit communities, and other non-governmental and community organizations.

As chair of the Commonwealth Working Group on Gender Equality and Health Indicators, the Women's Health Bureau at Health Canada has begun developing a framework for how governments can incorporate gender equality and gender-based systems of gender equality and health indicators. The Bureau, along with a team of gender-equality experts, is currently developing specialized gender-based analysis tools and training materials for the health sector.

The health of women in Canada is being promoted through an array of Health Canada programs and activities and through the work of the five Centres of Excellence for Women's Health in areas such as smoking, sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, breast cancer and cancer screening, menopause, mental health, health care system restructuring, substance abuse and cardiovascular disease.

In March 2000, a Canadian delegation of women's health experts, led by Health Canada and in co-operation with the Pan American Health Organization, met with the Ministries of Health, Status of Women and Social Services of Costa Rica to discuss possible co-operation in the areas of gender mainstreaming, women-centred health care, policy-oriented gender-sensitive research and research on women's health, community involvement and capacity building. The Centre on Women's Health in Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto (Canada) has been selected to manage the project.

In February 1999, the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada, with the support of Health Canada and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) convened an Aboriginal Roundtable on Sexual and Reproductive Health to identify priority issues. A framework for action was developed that helped guide the government's plans for including Indigenous people's issues in the Cairo + 5 review.

At the Ninth Conference of Spouses of Heads of State and Government, held in fall 1999 in Ottawa (Canada), a presentation on Canada's tele-health technology highlighted the effectiveness and efficiency of this means of providing health care to women in rural areas. Specifically, a live demonstration was provided showing how tele-health could be used to provide instruction to women on breast self-examination as a preventative measure for breast cancer. A video on tele-health was also shown that highlighted how tele-health could be used to diagnose a potentially difficult birth, thereby avoiding having to medically evacuate the patient.

### Canadian International Development Agency

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has provided $7 million toward the Pan American Health Organization's Perinatal Health Care Project in Peru, Nicaragua, Honduras and Bolivia. In addition, CIDA is allocating $200 000 to perinatal health care dissemination in Nicaragua and Honduras. Also in Honduras, a water and sanitation project emphasized the participation of women in all aspects of the project, especially in decision-making roles. This has led to a marked improvement in the capacity and self-esteem of women, and respect for the contributions that women can make to their communities.

## BASIC WORKERS RIGHTS

The Santiago Action Plan addressed the need to facilitate co-operative action to protect the basic rights of workers.

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**Exchange informational materials regarding their labour legislation, with the objective of contributing to better mutual knowledge of such legislation as well as to promote core labour standards recognised by the International Labour Organisation – freedom of association; the right to organise and bargain collectively; the prohibition of forced labour; the elimination of all exploitative forms of child labour; and non-discrimination in employment. Such information will also include references to the mechanisms and/or legal authorities of Ministries of Labour to implement core labour standards as a fundamental component of productive workplaces and positive labour-management relations.**

### Human Resources Development Canada

Canada participates in meetings of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Americas Group in Geneva (Switzerland) on a regular basis. The meetings provide opportunities to exchange information and explore possibilities for common positions regarding issues such as the promotion of core labour standards, as well as future ILO directions, including work plans, budgets and administration.

A tripartite Canadian delegation attended the 14th Regional American Meeting of the ILO in Lima (Peru) in August 1999. Delegates discussed the ILO Director General's report entitled *Responsible Co-ordinator for Indigenous Populations*, and adopted conclusions and recommendations to guide ILO technical co-operation activities in the region. Participants also discussed and exchanged information on the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work as well as the new ILO Convention concerning the prohibition and immediate actions for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

Canada promotes respect for workers' rights and labour standards in the Americas through its participation in the working groups created in 1998 to follow up on the Viña del Mar Declaration and Action Plan on Globalization of the Economy and its Social and Labour Dimensions. Canada also supports enhanced labour co-operation to complement the Free Trade Area of the Americas and the Summit of the Americas process through its participation in the Working Group on Modernization of the State and Labour Administration: Requirements and Challenges.

Through a request via the Organization of American States in 1999, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) provided the OAS with information related to Canada's new Employment Insurance (EI) system, which superceded the former Unemployment Insurance system in 1996. The report outlines the basic facts about EI in Canada and highlights some of the income and employment benefits that are part of this system. Also in 1999, HRDC's Labour Program shared with the OAS some of the major developments and/or changes it has made in Canadian labour legislation. The majority of the changes made over the past 10 years are in the areas of employment standards, industrial relations and occupational safety and health.

The Workplace Information Directorate provides up-to-date, customized information on industrial relations and collective bargaining. Its services include providing advice and assistance to clients in preparing for and resolving issues at the bargaining table. The Directorate is used by negotiators, researchers, economists, consultants, journalists, teachers and many others in the industrial relations community, both in Canada and abroad.

### Canadian International Development Agency

The Canadian International Development Agency is providing $515 000 support to improve the safety and the environmental records of the Argentine oil and gas industry. The ultimate beneficiaries of this project will be the oil field workers, victims of workplace accidents. These workers are contract workers not covered by health plans.

**For these purposes carry out the exchanges by, among other means, furnishing informational materials on relevant changes to their labour legislation, mechanisms and/or legal authorities for implementation of core labour standards, and progress in the area of labour-management relations, to be provided at a meeting of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour, to be held in 1998 and their other meetings, as appropriate, including with the assistance of the Organisation of American States, International Labour Organisation and Inter-American Development Bank.**

### Human Resources Development Canada

Canada's Minister of Labour participated for the first time in the 11th Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour of the Organization of American States, held in Viña del Mar (Chile), in October 1998. At the meeting, the Government of Canada supported the objectives of the Declaration and Action Plan of Viña del Mar and reaffirmed its commitment to adopt the necessary measures to meet these commitments.

In February 2000, Canada participated in a follow-up to the Viña del Mar meeting. The Canadian delegation included members of Parliament, the Canadian Labour Congress, and officials of Human Resources Development Canada. At the meeting, Canada provided an update on the 2001 Summit of the Americas preparations and was selected to host the next Inter-American Conference in 2001.

In support of the Plan of Action issued at the 11th Conference of Ministers of Labour, Canada offered two workshops on preventive mediation and organizational change for countries in Central America and the Caribbean. Based on Canada's Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) Preventive Mediation Program, designed to promote better relations between employers and unions, the prevention and mediation workshop will offer participants an opportunity to identify the effect individual attitudes and/or behaviour have on the outcome of complex work-related negotiations. The workshop will also offer participants background information about Canada's FMCS Preventive Mediation Program and its services. The workshop on organizational change will focus on organizational change in a public-sector environment and include activities that promote reflection and interaction among participants.

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**Further secure their observance and promotion of internationally recognised core labour standards. In this context, they recognise the ILO as the competent body to set and deal with these standards and support the ongoing work of the ILO with regard to exchanges of information and the negotiation of a new Declaration of Principles on Fundamental Rights of Workers and appropriate follow-up; believe that economic growth and development fostered by increased trade and further trade liberalisation contribute to the promotion of these standards and should lead to higher levels of employment; similarly reject the use of labour standards for protectionist purposes, and, in this regard, note that the World Trade Organisation and ILO Secretariats shall continue their collaboration.**

Canada continues to support initiatives which will contribute to greater co-operation and information sharing through regional institutions such as the Organization of American States and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Canada strongly supported the development of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its follow-up, which was adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 1998. In December 1999, Canada filed its first Annual Report under the Declaration follow-up, outlining how it respects and promotes the principles of freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively, the abolition of forced labour and the elimination of child labour. Canada's Minister of Labour also participated in the discussions of the first global report under the Declaration at the 88th International Labour Conference.

Canada also actively participated in the negotiations that led to the adoption in June 1999, of the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, which Canada ratified in June 2000. Canada has supported the ILO's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labour, contributing $500 000 in 1998 and $3 million in 1999-2000 for the ILO's Statistical Information and Monitoring Program on Child Labour. The Program collects comprehensive and reliable data on child labour in a number of countries including Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and Ecuador. Canada has also committed an additional $12 million over the next four years to support ILO programs aimed at eliminating child labour.

## INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

At the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas greater prominence was assigned to the situation of Indigenous populations in the Americas by including a separate section in the Plan of Action. Leaders agreed to promote the participation of Indigenous peoples in their societies through adequate access to education, health care, and occupational training, with the aim of improving their standard of living.

At the Summit, the Government of Canada accepted the role of co-ordinator for Indigenous populations.

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**Support activities in the field of education aimed at improving the participation of Indigenous populations and communities in society. Such activities would seek to strengthen the identify of Indigenous populations and promote respective coexistence among different social groups in communities and States.**

In 1998, the Government of Canada announced Gathering Strength: Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan, designed to renew the relationship with the Aboriginal people of Canada. Built on the principles of mutual respect, recognition, responsibility and sharing, it begins with a statement of reconciliation that outlines the mistakes and injustices of the past. It then moves to a statement of renewal based on four key objectives: renewing partnerships; strengthening Aboriginal governance; developing a new fiscal relationship; and supporting strong communities, people and economies.

These objectives are very much in line with promoting co-existence, improving participation of Indigenous populations and communities, and as part of this, supporting activities for education.

Under Gathering Strength, some 250 education reform projects have been undertaken across Canada involving the federal, provincial and territorial governments, and Aboriginal groups. For example, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between British Columbia, First Nations, the federal government, school trustees and other interested groups will tie payments for education to student performance. The aim of the MoU is to reduce gaps in education performance. The Manitoba Education Resource Centre is receiving funding. Further funding is being provided to innovative projects for First Nation communities, both for the classroom and school board. Outcomes are improving school enrolment rates and reducing the gap between enrolment rates of Aboriginal and other Canadians.

Aboriginal education and languages have been supported through several programs, including the Cultural/Educational Centres Program. The Aboriginal Languages Initiative was announced in June 1998 to preserve, protect and teach Aboriginal languages. The fund is being managed and delivered by Aboriginal organizations and focusses on Aboriginal language instruction in communities, as a complement to existing school-based Aboriginal language programs.

In June 1998, the *Mi'kmaq Education Act* became law. It transfers the Government of Canada's legislative and administrative jurisdiction for education to nine Aboriginal groups in Nova Scotia, thus enabling the Mi'kmaq to develop education systems and institutions to preserve and respect the values and traditions of Mi'kmaq culture.

A longstanding Elementary/Secondary Education Program, provided by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, provides funding to ensure that eligible Aboriginal people have access to education programs relevant to their culture and comparable in scope and quality to those available in public schools. In 1998-1999, $929 million was allocated to this Program. The Post-Secondary Student Support Program includes the University and College Entrance Preparation Program which assists Aboriginal students with the costs of tuition fees, books and travel and provides living allowances when applicable. More than 27 000 students attend college or university under this Program. Support is also provided to post-secondary educational institutions for the development and delivery of special programs.

The Aboriginal Head Start Program is an early-intervention and school-readiness program, that since 1998 has been extended from large urban and Northern communities to First Nations reserve communities. Administered through Health Canada, the Program is designed to foster the spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical growth of the child as well as a desire for life-long learning among Aboriginal children and their families. The Program supports parents and guardians as the prime teachers and caregivers of their children, making sure parents/caregivers play a key role in the planning, development, operation and evaluation of the program. There are more than 300 Aboriginal Head Start project sites on- and off-reserves across Canada, receiving some $47 million in funding and serving approximately 8000 Aboriginal children.

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**Promote the widening of basic and secondary education services with training orientation, mainly in Regions with high percentages of Indigenous populations, through greater support from Governments and international cooperation, at the request of interested Governments, so that Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations have the opportunity to receive technical training and contribute to the development of their countries. To the extent possible, the training areas which are implemented parallel to educational processes should respond to the needs of the Regions and to productive strategies.**

Although the Government of Canada has transferred responsibility for training to the provinces, it retains responsibility for training programs for Aboriginal peoples.

### Human Resources Development Canada

In 1999, Human Resources Development Canada launched the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Strategy as part of Gathering Strength, the Government of Canada's action plan in support of reconciliation and renewal with Canadian Aboriginal peoples. This a five-year, $5 billion plan delivered through a full partnership with Aboriginal leaders and organizations.

Under the strategy, 79 labour market agreements respond to the needs of Aboriginal peoples across Canada, regardless of status or residency. A private-sector Aboriginal Human Resources Development Sector Council involves educational institutions, business leaders, prominent Aboriginal people and political organizations in promoting education, training and employment among Aboriginal Canadians. Agreements on accountabilities ensure satisfaction between agreement holders and their community members, between agreement holders and the government, and ensure the satisfaction of Parliament and the Canadian public. The strategy also contains specific programming for youth, people with disabilities, as well as urban Aboriginal Canadians.

Training has been an integral part of the work for the creation of the new Canadian territory — Nunavut. Arrangements have been made for training for Inuit to help them take advantage of new employment opportunities generated by the creation of the new territorial government in April 1999.

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation is a non-profit corporation that administers and manages the $350 million healing fund, established for community-based projects that address the effects of the residential schools on former Aboriginal students. In June 1999, the Foundation announced the first set of community-based healing initiatives to address the legacy of physical and sexual abuse that took place at some residential schools. Projects for education, counselling and trauma work receive funding on an ongoing basis.

### Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

The First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy was introduced in 1996 to help youth prepare for the labour market. The Strategy includes such programs as the First Nations and Inuit Summer Student Career Placement Program; a science camp program; a work experience program and a youth business program. As well, career fairs are held each year for Aboriginal youth across Canada. Intended to expose high school students to a variety of training and career opportunities, more than 40 000 Aboriginal youth have taken part. The Strategy has been extended due to the positive results and serious employment problems faced by Aboriginal youth.

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**In cooperation with regional organisations, development institutions and NGOs, actively support and promote capacity building activities and productive projects, including agriculture, handicrafts, small trade and industry and marketing. To the extent possible, these should be guided and administered by Indigenous populations.**

Gathering Strength is an integrated plan of action aimed at addressing the key challenges facing Aboriginal people. It promotes self-sufficiency and economic development, and the enhancement and strengthening of the capacity of Aboriginal governments and organizations to run accountable, responsive government systems. A First Nations governance institute for research and training and professional development programs for First Nation and Inuit leaders, and their public service, are being established.

Aboriginal Business Canada (ABC) is guided by four prioritie s. Through the priority Strengthening Aboriginal Financial and Business Organizations, ABC has financially assisted Aboriginal business organizations, Aboriginal capital corporations, and Aboriginal community futures development corporations that develop capacity-building seminars and training for Aboriginal economic development officers.

Furthermore, through ABC's Innovation priority, investments are made that enable Aboriginal entrepreneurs to implement measures that improve and enhance their businesses productivity either through new methods of production or by incorporating new technologies, notably information technologies.

Through its Trade and Market Expansion priority, Aboriginal Business Canada is able to assist Aboriginal entrepreneurs in reaching new regional, national and international markets. ABC routinely makes investments that assist Aboriginal entrepreneurs with marketing plans. In June 2000, ABC assisted a group of Western Canada-based artists and artisans on a trade mission to Holland and Belgium. Particular sectors targeted for development under this priority are Aboriginal cultural and eco-tourism.

A joint initiative on policy development has currently been implemented by the Assembly of First Nations — a national political organization representing 633 Aboriginal reserve-based communities throughout Canada — and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. It is aimed at developing operational and policy options by which First Nations may assume greater control of lands and governance.

In April 1998, the province of Quebec released its guidelines on Aboriginal affairs entitled Partnership, Development, Achievement. The guidelines include a range of actions to promote economic development and job creation, increase the financial self-sufficiency of Aboriginal people, put in place a fund for Aboriginal economic development, among other things. Quebec has allocated $125 million to an economic and community development fund to carry out concrete economic development projects within Aboriginal communities.

In 1999 the map of northern Canada was transformed with the creation of a new territory called Nunavut. The founding of this territory was a result of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and was made possible through a partnership between the Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. The partnership has culminated in the completion of the Nunavut Legislative Assembly, 10 new Government of Nunavut buildings and 250 units of government employee housing, all built by an Inuit-owned company. Municipal infrastructure has been upgraded in 11 communities to accommodate population growth due to Government of Nunavut operations. Since 1999, the new government has developed policies and priorities and begun delivering programs and services to its citizens. It is building capacity and shaping its future as a full partner in the Canadian federation.

An Inter-American workshop on Intellectual Property Rights was held in April 1999 in Canada. The Métis National Council of Women, and Rights and Democracy — formerly known as the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development — sponsored the workshop, with financial support from several Government of Canada departments.

Many hemispheric partners are also members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. Canada co-sponsored the Indigenous Women in Export Business Seminar in New Zealand in June 1999, designed to share best practices, establish trade contacts and develop recommendations for APEC ministers of trade.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs and the Counsellor for International Indigenous Issues have played key roles in promoting Indigenous issues at the international level. In December 1998, the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) made an historic first address by an Indigenous leader to the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States. In his remarks, he set out the AFN's vision for the development of constructive relations among the Indigenous populations of the Americas and between these populations and OAS member states.

In addition to multilateral activities within the OAS, the AFN is active bilaterally in the Americas. In 1998, the AFN, in partnership with the Government of Canada, opened a dialogue on Indigenous issues with the Government of Mexico and participated in a joint Parliamentary/AFN mission to monitor elections in Chiapas, Mexico. The AFN and members of the Métis National Council have also participated in trade missions to the Americas. In February 1999, the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Mexico's Instituto Nacional Indigenista to promote co-operation within the economic, social and commercial spheres between the parties involved.

In September 1999, the Aboriginal International Business Development Committee drafted a federal inter-departmental Aboriginal international business development action plan, and in December 1999, they launched the Directory of Aboriginal Exporters.

In November 1999, DFAIT and the Chilean Economic Development Agency signed an MoU on international business development for small and medium-sized enterprises. A key component of the MoU, is the recognition that women and Indigenous entrepreneurs in both Canada and Chile own businesses whose growth and international business development is important for the small and medium-sized business community and the economy as a whole.

**Facilitate the organisation of round-tables at the national and hemispheric level, in partnership with Indigenous populations, with a view to promoting greater understanding of and cooperation in the areas of education and health, with a particular emphasis on women and children. Governments will also promote research initiatives on the relationship between Indigenous populations, poverty and development.**

Progress has been made on the organization of roundtables, dealing with Indigenous issues, both at the national and hemispheric levels. Through dialogue and collective action, these roundtables have expanded the breadth and depth of our hemispheric linkages.

In February 1999, the Government of Canada announced substantial investments in Aboriginal health issues, including funding for a First Nations and Inuit Health Information System to allow for better tracking of health outcomes. Additional funding has been provided for an Aboriginal health institute to develop greater expertise on health problems. An Aboriginal diabetes strategy is being developed, and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program and related activities to deal with fetal alcohol syndrome have been expanded. A national roundtable on sexual and reproductive health was held with Indigenous representatives and sponsored by Health Canada. A network of urban multipurpose Aboriginal youth centres is being developed to improve the economic, social and personal prospects of urban Aboriginal youth. Projects and activities focus on a wide range of Aboriginal youth issues and needs, such as encouraging youth to stay in school; increasing their effective participation in employment and skills development; and improving life skills, including parenting. Several Aboriginal organizations have a major role in the management and administration of this program across Canada. A budget of $100 million will be available until April 2003.

Federal, provincial, territorial Aboriginal affairs ministers and national Aboriginal leaders met in December 1999 to discuss pressing issues such as Aboriginal youth and Aboriginal participation in the economy. At the meeting, an ongoing governmental-Aboriginal process was established for information sharing and co-ordination and implementation of policies and programs by government working groups and Aboriginal officials. The process includes annual meetings of Aboriginal affairs ministers and national Aboriginal leaders. An Aboriginal youth strategy was approved, including a national Aboriginal youth conference, and a working group was formed to address issues of Aboriginal participation in the economy.

In March 2000, the Assembly of First Nations in Canada co-sponsored with the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, a roundtable on hemispheric Indigenous issues. The roundtable brought together Aboriginal leaders from across Canada, Indigenous representatives from the United States, Mexico and Guatemala, officials from the Government of Canada and the Organization of American States and representatives of the private business sector to discuss hemispheric co-operation, trade, ethical business practices on Indigenous traditional lands, Indigenous inclusion in hemispheric institutions and processes and preparations for the Third Summit of the Americas.

The Arctic Council brings together the eight circumpolar countries, including Canada and the United States, and Aboriginal organizations, which are Permanent Participants. Canada is leading the initiative on The Future of Children and Youth of the Arctic, established in 1998. Its main objectives are to improve the health and well-being of children and youth in the Arctic, and to increase the knowledge and understanding of sustainable development among Arctic youth and children. A health assessment study, and internship program and a networking program are the principal projects of the initiative. The initiative reflects priorities of the Northern Dimension to Canada's Foreign Policy, which was released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in June 2000. The new policy emphasizes the importance of working toward the human security of Northerners and the sustainable development of the Arctic.

In addition, Status of Women Canada co-funded, through its Women's Program, various initiatives to address, among others, the issue of intellectual property rights, and violence against Métis and Inuit women and their children.

The Aboriginal Women's Roundtable on Gender Equality, organized by Status of Women Canada in March 2000, brought together Aboriginal women from across Canada to discuss, for the first time with the federal government, gender equality and consultation principles and models. This was a significant step toward involving the diversity of Aboriginal women in the federal policy-making process.

**Proceed with inter-governmental examination within the Organisation of American States framework of the proposed American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples prepared by the Inter-American Commission Human Rights, with a view toward the possible adoption of a Declaration.**

Progress is being made in the work by Organization of American States member states on the proposed American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Populations, which the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights presented to the General Assembly in 1997.

In February 1999, Canada, along with Canadian Aboriginal groups, participated in an experts meeting to discuss the contents of the proposed American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Populations. The government delegations completed the review of the preamble of the proposed declaration. During the course of this process, an ad hoc Indigenous committee of the Americas was created that was composed of representatives of different Indigenous communities. The purpose of the committee is to participate more effectively in the drafting and negotiation of the Declaration, and to voice the priorities of Indigenous communities.

Canada took part in negotiations in the first working group on Aboriginal peoples to consider the Proposed Declaration on Indigenous Populations at OAS Headquarters in Washington, D.C. (United States), in November 1999. Following five days of intense deliberation, the working group concluded its first meeting in which representatives of the Inter-American bodies, OAS member states, and Indigenous communities from across the Americas participated. The meetings were presided by the Chair of the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs. The working group concluded a first reading of the proposed declaration and registered a number of observations made by the participants. In accordance with procedures previously agreed upon by the member states, representatives of the Indigenous communities commented on the various articles of the Proposed Declaration. Their interventions were recorded in the report of the chair of the working group.

The progress achieved on the draft declaration over the course of 1999 is significant. Praise for the year's achievements, including real dialogue between states and Indigenous peoples, was voiced both by government delegations and Indigenous representatives when implementation of Indigenous items was considered at the February 2000 open meeting of the OAS Special Committee on Inter-American Summits Management.

In April 2000 the Assembly of First Nations, supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, undertook a formal study and analysis of the mandate, structure and role of the Instituto Indigena Inter-Americano (III), a specialized agency of the OAS, as an Indigenous contribution to the proposed reform and revitalization of the III. The study included consultations with Indigenous representatives from Canada, the United States, Mexico and Guatemala, officials of these governments and of the OAS and the III. The study's report contains detailed recommendations for consideration in the process of III revitalization now mandated by the 30th General Assembly of the OAS.

## HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

To mitigate conditions of hunger and malnutrition, Canada has organized various initiatives at home and abroad in supporting the mandates endorsed by leaders at the 1998 Summit of the Americas. Some of these activities are described in the section that follows.

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**Give the highest priority to reducing infant malnutrition, concentrating efforts on health, nutrition and education programs for the nutrition of infants, particularly those less than three, as those are the years of greatest vulnerability. To that end, emphasis shall be given to adequate nutrition and the correction of specific nutritional deficiencies, specifically with vitamin and mineral supplements combined with greater use of vaccinations and immunisations and monitoring during the growth of the child.**

### Health Canada

At home, the Government of Canada supports various programs that concentrate on providing nutrition and health care to infants.

The Aboriginal Head Start Program, for instance, is an early intervention and school readiness program, that since 1998 has been extended from large urban and Northern communities to First Nations reserve communities. Administered through Health Canada, the Program is designed to foster the spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical growth of the child, as well as a desire for life-long learning among Aboriginal children and their families. The Program supports parents and guardians as the prime teachers and caregivers of their children, making sure parents/caregivers play a key role in the planning, development, operation and evaluation of the Program. There are more than 300 Aboriginal Head Start project sites on- and off-reserve across Canada, receiving some $47 million in funding and serving approximately 8000 Aboriginal children.

Similarly, the Community Action Program for Children, delivered through Health Canada regional offices, funds community groups to establish and deliver services that address the developmental needs of young children at risk (from birth to age six).

The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program is a comprehensive community-based program that supports pregnant women most likely to have unhealthy babies due to poor health and nutrition. The Program provides resources for community-based groups to offer supports such as nutrition (e.g., food and/or vitamin/mineral supplements, nutrition counselling, food skills), knowledge and education (e.g., specialized counselling on prenatal health issues, breastfeeding and infant development), social support, and assistance with access to services (e.g., shelter, health care, specialized counselling).

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**Give high priority to the nutritional and caloric needs of women before and during pregnancy and while they are breast-feeding. Governments therefore will promote breast-feeding as an as an important source of nutrition for babies. The nutritional needs of other high risk groups such as the elderly and the disabled will also be addressed.**

Persons with disabilities were identified in Canada as a national priority for social policy renewal. Among several key areas, the Government of Canada's Budget 2000 also addressed the nutritional needs of Canadians with disabilities. Measures include, among others, an estimated $45 million a year in new tax assistance for persons with disabilities and their caregivers; and $11.5 million over three years for the Health and Activity Limitation Survey.

### Health Canada

The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program is a comprehensive community-based program that supports pregnant women at risk of threatening their health and the development of their babies. The Program provides resources for community-based groups to offer supports such as nutrition (e.g., food and/or vitamin/mineral supplements, nutrition counselling, food skills), knowledge and education (e.g., specialized counselling on prenatal health issues, breastfeeding and infant development), social support, and assistance with access to services (e.g., shelter, health care, specialized counselling).

Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants, a statement of the Joint Working Group of the Canadian Pediatric Society, Dietitians of Canada and Health Canada was released in 1998. It summarizes the existing scientific literature on infant nutrition and presents principles and recommendations to help health care professionals promote optimal nutritional care for infants in Canada. *Nutrition for a Healthy Pregnancy: National Guidelines for the Childbearing Years* was released by Health Canada in 1999 to give health practitioners nutrition- related information for counselling women during the preconception and prenatal periods. The guidelines help health practitioners to identify women at risk of low nutritional status and poor pregnancy outcome, and local specialized programs for at-risk pregnant women to help improve their health and the health of their children.

In 2000, Health Canada released the *Family-Centred Maternity and Newborn Care: National Guidelines*, which were developed to assist hospitals and other health care agencies in planning, implementing and evaluating maternal and newborn programs and services. The guidelines are designed for policy makers, health care providers (e.g., physicians, nurses, midwives), parents, program planners and administrators. The protection, support and promotion of breastfeeding is a priority focus.

In celebration of the International Year of Older Persons in 1999, Health Canada provided support to the Dietitians of Canada to recognize healthy aging and eating during National Nutrition Month. Among the products developed were fact sheets on practical ideas, easy recipes for healthy aging and active living, and a resource manual for health professionals on healthy aging.

In 1998, Health Canada supported the symposium Enhancing Seniors' Nutrition: From Awareness to Action. The goal of this conference was to foster collaboration to reinforce healthy eating practices among Canadian seniors.

In a joint effort with Mexico, the Government of Canada hosted a symposium on healthy aging and disease prevention in Ottawa (Canada) in March 2000. The symposium was undertaken under the auspices of the Joint Memorandum of Understanding on Health Matters, signed by both governments in 1999. The meeting allowed Canadian and Mexican experts to exchange views, describe respective programs and experiences on healthy aging, and identify areas for future collaboration. Discussions focussed on nutrition, care giving, and other issues related to public health and healthy aging. The symposium produced a bilateral plan of action on four priority areas, including strengthening expertise in the area of nutrition. Additional bilateral meetings took place in Mexico in June and September 2000 to set out a long-term strategy for bilateral co-operation on aging and health.

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**Continue, as far as possible, with the dialogue begun at the Inter-American Conference on Hunger, held in Buenos Aires in October 1996, and they will explore the application, in their respective jurisdictions of the measures suggested there, in particular the creation of alliances with the private sector to fight hunger and malnutrition, the creation of food bank networks with volunteer participation and the creation of an Honorary Council dedicated to fostering activities to reach Summit objectives in this area.**

### Canadian International Development Agency

The Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) food aid strategy is used to responding to emergencies and to fostering development. The overriding goal is to reduce hunger and malnutrition as obstacles to health and sustainable development. The link between nutrition, health and poverty is at the core of CIDA's food aid activities: malnutrition causes disease; disease prevents people from working; and the loss of income results in increased hunger. To break this cycle, food aid activities are linked with complementary initiatives in the areas of health, education, income generation and institutional strengthening. Food aid initiatives include, for example, food-for-work programs and targeted food aid to improve the nutritional status of vulnerable women and children, or as an incentive for vulnerable populations to attend health clinics for immunization and other primary health services. CIDA's Food Aid Centre supports the Canada-based Micro-Nutrient Initiative which conducts applied research on micro-nutrient deficiencies, supports governments and non-governmental organizations in distributing micro-nutrient supplements and catalyzes the private sector in fortifying staple foods in the Hemisphere.

In Haiti, CIDA's Food Aid Program has approved $24 million in projects since 1998 to improve the health and nutrition status of the poor and sick, and assist primary school students and the illiterate. For instance, the program provides food to tuberculosis patients, which both increases their nutritional status and gives them an incentive to continue with their full course of treatment.

Through CIDA's food monetization project, a $3 million micro-nutrient initiative with Peru's Ministry of Health was made possible. The goal of the initiative is to address micro-nutrient deficiencies among 60 percent of the population at risk over a three-year period. CIDA also contributed $8.25 million in food aid contributions for thousands of Hurricane Mitch victims in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras; $6.5 million through the World Food Program (WFP) for feeding and food-for-work; $250 000 for the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture's Seeds of Hope Program to supply seeds to re-plant crops; $1 million to World Vision Canada for short-term feeding and longer-term food security interventions; and $500 000 with the Canadian Food Grains Bank for food-for-work projects that assisted in providing food security and rehabilitating community infrastructures. Also, the Food Aid Centre provides about $50 million a year to WFP, some of which is used in their regional programming (e.g., in Colombia, and Ecuador).

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Pursuant to the Summit on Sustainable Development held in Santa Cruz (Bolivia) in 1996, progress is being made in addressing sustainable development issues. To further implement mandates of the Santa Cruz Action Plan, leaders at the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas agreed to further implement mandates of the Santa Cruz Action Plan.

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**We recognise the effort made by the Organisation of American States in terms of follow-up of the Sustainable Development Summit, and instruct it, through the Inter-American Commission on Sustainable Development, to continue coordination related to fulfilment of its mandates. We ask the entities of the Inter-American System and the United Nations to strengthen cooperation related to implementation of the Santa Cruz Plan of Action.**

To achieve global sustainability and economic prosperity, the Government of Canada fully supports sustainable development initiatives. Canada's commitment to sustainable development shapes Canada's engagement in international economic, social and environmental forums and initiatives, within the Hemisphere and globally. In 1995, legislation was enacted to help strengthen the government's performance in promoting sustainable development. Amendments were made to the *Auditor General's Act* to create the position of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development in the Office of the Auditor General. The amendments also require each federal department to table a sustainable development strategy in Parliament every three years, and to report annually on progress in achieving their commitments.

Canada works with many partners in the Hemisphere to advance shared sustainable development goals and strongly supports the commitment made by leaders to implement the Santa Cruz Action Plan. Canada is working actively to ensure that the Organization of American States can fulfill this mandate.

In 1998, the Inter-American Commission of Sustainable Development sponsored a gathering of experts from Central American government in San José (Costa Rica). The aim of this regional workshop was to develop concrete measures to help Central American countries implement initiatives from the Santa Cruz Action Plan.

Canada was an active participant at the October 1999 meeting of the OAS Inter-American Commission on Sustainable Development. At this meeting, as in other forums, Canada delivered a strong message on the importance for achieving sustainable development through integrated economic, social and environmental approaches and institutional co-ordination. This will help to ensure identifying and building on synergies, leveraging external benefits, and minimizing duplication of efforts in responding to sustainable development challenges. Canada's participation in hemispheric organizations is targeted to ensuring that co-ordination is a core function of those institutions engaged on cross-cutting issues. Canada also endorses the efforts of the OAS Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment in this regard and has encouraged it to continue its efforts in this area. Canada has emphasized the importance for members of the OAS Inter-Agency Task Force to clarify opportunities for greater co-ordination and to identify how resources can best be allocated within program areas to take advantage of synergies and to maximize benefits.

Canada recognizes that reporting on progress can make a contribution to implementing sustainable development by sharing lessons learned and best practices, and by enhancing accountability. However, reporting should not be so onerous as to deter participation. Canada worked actively at the Commission on Sustainable Development meeting to obtain agreement on a realistic and focussed schedule for reviewing and reporting on progress in achieving sustainable development in the Hemisphere and in implementing the Santa Cruz Action Plan. Canada has also encouraged the OAS Unit for Sustainable Development to explore a collaborative dialogue with the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development on the implementation of collective goals and objectives.

Canada has suggested that the OAS develop a reporting format in close consultation with other agencies, in particular the OAS Inter-American Commission on Sustainable Development, that recognizes the role of reporting in advancing implementation and the importance of comparability and relevance; that draws on existing reporting mechanisms to the extent possible; and that does not impose an undue burden on resources.

Canada encourages the OAS to include relevant activities of international agencies engaged in the Hemisphere in its reporting and to draw on and/or reference reports prepared in accordance with reporting obligations under multilateral conventions and protocols.

## CO-OPERATION

Leaders in Santiago agreed to further implement co-operation mandates of the Santa Cruz Action Plan.

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**With the intention of achieving a greater impact in our national and collective efforts, we charge national agencies and organisations responsible for international cooperation with supporting the preparation and implementation of programs and projects which flow from the Plan of Action. Moreover, we request the participation of the multilateral institutions with the same objective.**

## Canadian International Development Agency

Canada's Official Development Assistance (ODA) program supports sustainable development in developing countries in order to reduce poverty and to contribute to a more secure, equitable, and prosperous world. In a world of increasing interdependence, this mandate is more important than ever. Canadians recognize that their economic prosperity, the state of their environment, and their security as individuals depends on developing effective responses to the daunting challenges faced by the developing world. CIDA's current policy for ODA, introduced in 1995, lists six program priorities: basic human needs; gender equality; infrastructure services; human rights, democracy and good governance; private sector development; and the environment.

While maintaining these priorities, CIDA has strengthened its programming and is focussing resources where the needs are the greatest, and assistance can make the biggest difference. One area that meets these two criteria is basic social development, essentially, health and education. There is strong evidence that sound investments in basic health and nutrition and basic education can significantly outweigh the return on investments in other programming areas. Returns are both immediate and long-term. A healthy, well-nourished, and literate society can improve the lives of its citizens and help spur economic growth, which in turn contributes to reducing poverty and a creating brighter future for the society as a whole.

Among the many health matters that developing countries face, there is one that stands out as a challenge with far-reaching development impacts across all society — the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Despite its relative youth, HIV/AIDS is killing more people than any other infectious disease. In some countries, it threatens to overwhelm development gains and has led to a decline in life-expectancy rates.

Social development must reach all members of society, especially children. Many girls and boys in the developing world are deprived of their basic rights to health and education. Some are confronted with additional challenges, such as exploitative labour, the loss of family members, sexual exploitation, life on the streets, recruitment into armed forces to fight as soldiers. These children often exhibit great resilience in coping with the many challenges they face. To help address these issues, CIDA is expanding and strengthening its programming in the areas of basic education; basic health and nutrition; HIV/AIDS; and child protection.

CIDA is responding to the development challenge in the Americas by supporting activities that promote a politically stable, economically liberal and socially equitable region, free of environmental degradation. Most recently, these challenges have included natural disasters such as Hurricanes Mitch and George, and El Niño-related events, as well as short-term economic crises related to trends in Asia.

Disbursements of $127.7 million in the Americas in 1999-2000, represented about 20 percent of CIDA's total country-to-country Official Development Assistance. These resources were divided among three main regional programs: the Caribbean, Central America and South America. There is also a hemispheric component which covers CIDA's co-operation with institutions such as the Organization of American States, as well as partnerships between CIDA and Canadian non-governmental organizations that have a hemispheric focus — for example, the Canadian

Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL) and the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education. Through its Canadian Partnership Branch, CIDA helps to develop relationships between Canadian NGOs, institutions, and members of the private-sector and their developing-country partners in such sectors as environmental protection, health, agriculture, and small- and medium-enterprises development. CIDA also participates closely in the programs and projects of key multilateral institutions that are active in the Americas, such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and the OAS. This work, mostly achieved by CIDA's Multilateral Program, helps to promote sustainable development to reduce poverty, and promote prosperity, human rights and security. With international partners, CIDA also ensures that Canada's humanitarian assistance and food aid are timely and effective.

CIDA's Caribbean Program includes major activities in the Commonwealth Caribbean and Haiti. In the Commonwealth Caribbean, CIDA priorities include good governance, with a focus on public sector reform and civil society; private sector development; and environmental management. In Haiti — CIDA's largest program in the Americas in recent years — activities focus on basic human needs, economic development and the consolidation of democracy.

In Central America, CIDA is supporting civil society groups working to promote human rights, democracy and good governance. Canadian expertise is also helping to improve the sustainable management of the region's natural resources. And CIDA is at work in supporting efforts by countries to harmonize their economic and trade policies as a means to increase regional trade.

Hurricane Mitch created a new set of challenges for Central American countries and the international donor community. To assist the region, Canada is focussing its assistance in sectors where it has significant expertise and experience, such as environmental protection, low-income housing, basic health care, and natural resource management. Canada is also a member of a group of five countries — along with the United States, Germany, Spain and Sweden — working to ensure transparent and efficient aid implementation. Local governments, donor agencies and civil society organizations are also involved.

In South America, CIDA has bilateral and regional programs in five countries. An examples is the Southern Cone Technology Transfer Fund, active in Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. Bilateral programs reflect the reality and state of development of each particular country, with the poorer countries receiving a significantly greater share of financial resources. Countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay receive much smaller contributions from CIDA. In the Andean region, CIDA focusses on poverty reduction and access to social infrastructures, support to economic growth, and human rights and good governance. In the Southern Cone, CIDA uses technology transfer to help reduce poverty and inequities. Support is also provided on governance issues, particularly through public-sector reform.

CIDA's hemispheric program supports multilateral projects that engage countries from a minimum of two sub-regions of the Americas. This is being accomplished by supporting inter-American co-operation and integration initiatives, strengthened inter-American institutions and expanded civil society participation that allow for and encourage public participation and power sharing, transparency and accountability, the equitable distribution of resources and equal access to services.

The mandate of CIDA's Canadian Partnership Branch is to promote mutually beneficial partnerships for sustainable development between Canadian and developing country organizations. A principal distinguishing feature of the Branch is its responsiveness to the initiatives of Canadian organizations and businesses responsible for planning and implementing projects in collaboration with partner countries.

The Branch's Non-Governmental Organizations Program provides support for the programs and projects of Canadian and international NGOs. The Institutional Co-operation Program supports the work of Canadian universities, colleges, co-operatives, professional associations, unions and specialised technical institutions. The Industrial Co-operation Program supports the development of Canadian business activities in developing countries. The Youth Action Program is responsible for the International Youth Internship Program, which offers young Canadians the opportunity to gain work experience in international development projects overseas.

Since April 1999, the NGO Program has disbursed $63.8 million for partner programs and projects in the Americas in the areas of basic human needs, democracy and good governance, and women and development. About 50 percent of all NGO efforts relate to basic human needs, including the provision of safe water, health, nutrition, education and housing. Many of the well-known Canadian NGOs are present in the Americas — for example, CARE, OXFAM, the major Christian churches, Horizons of Friendship, CoDev Canada, Save the Children Canada, CUSO, World University Service of Canada, Canadian Executive Service Organization and the Canadian Centre for International Studies and Co-operation. The NGO Program currently provides funding to NGOs in support of their work. NGOs also make their own contributions, raised through a variety of sources including Canadian public donations.

There are currently 72 projects supported by the Institutional Co-operation Program in Latin America and the Caribbean. These projects — 50 percent of which are in the education sector — aim to apply Canadian civil society expertise in partnership with developing country institutions to strengthen their sustainable development. In Haiti, Canada's University of Moncton and Haiti's University of Quisqueya, along with local NGO partners, are addressing the food security issues facing the poorer rural population through improved agricultural and fisheries techniques.

In Costa Rica, Belize, Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, the Agricultural Institute of Canada, through the Agricultural Co-operation Program, is working to strengthen partner agricultural institutions and help them contribute to increased food production, rural poverty alleviation and more sustainable agricultural methods. A good example of institutional co-operation support, related to environmental issues, occurs in Peru, where the Falls Brook Centre of New Brunswick (Canada) is working to develop and implement a system of certification for non-timber forest products to help promote sustainable forestry, organic agriculture and fair trade systems.

Since 1982, the Industrial Co-operation Program has disbursed $264.5 million to more than 1200 Canadian firms pursuing business opportunities in the Americas. The industrial, energy, agriculture and water and sanitation sectors have benefited most from the program.

Since the inception of the International Youth Internship Program in 1997, 36 percent of the 1700 young Canadian participants (i.e., 615 participants) have carried out their assignments in the Americas. The largest concentrations have been in Costa Rica, the Eastern Caribbean, Honduras, Guatemala, and Haiti. A number of youth interns have played an active role in post-Hurricane Mitch rehabilitation efforts.

Canada's strong support for multilateral development institutions is based on the recognition that industrialized and developing countries are interdependent and must work together to promote a world free from poverty, disease and conflict, and one which is not depleting the resources of the future in order to meet the needs of the present. As the threats to our global society become increasingly complex and international in scope — from climate change, to the spread of infectious diseases, to economic crises — sustainable solutions will require effective instruments of global governance and strengthened multilateral institutions.

CIDA's Multilateral Programs Branch ensures that Canada plays a strong role in the international development institutions that are helping to shape the global agenda — institutions such as the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank. The Multilateral Programs Branch works through these organizations to promote sustainable development, including reducing poverty, promoting prosperity, and improving the quality of human life.

The provision of food aid and humanitarian relief is an important — and perhaps the most visible — aspect of the work of multilateral programming. The Branch is responsible for ensuring that in emergency situations Canadian assistance is timely, effective and appropriate. This was particularly evident at the time of Hurricane Mitch when more than $12 million in humanitarian assistance and food aid was provided by CIDA to assist victims of the hurricane.

## CONCLUSION

*Canada and the Summits of the Americas* shows how, both at home and abroad, Canada is working to support mandates from the Summit process. Canada has had a head start as many of the practices recommended in the plans of action are already firmly entrenched in Canadian society. Canada has also contributed actively to the development of regional strategies that have been implemented to improve the quality of life for Canadians and for citizens throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Efforts toward reforms in education — as set forth in the Santiago Summit Plan of Action — rest on the principles of equity, quality, relevance and efficiency. The report indicates that Canada's education system possesses a sound infrastructure for the dissemination of knowledge based on these principles. Since the Santiago Summit, educational opportunities have been further developed through new policies and programs including fellowships and exchange programs, development and use of information technologies in education, educational statistics and quality evaluation, programs for vulnerable populations, education and training in the workplace, professionalization of teachers and intercultural education. The report shows how Canada's education system offers Canadians a brighter future and the opportunity to compete and succeed in a knowledge-based economy.

Canada's efforts to advance democracy, justice and human rights are known and respected the world over. There exists a clear and consistent focus on openness and transparency, non-discrimination, civil society engagement, freedom of expression and the protection of vulnerable groups, including women and children. The report highlights the considerable legislation and programming that exist to promote and safeguard the rights of all Canadians, including the right to due process of law, protection from discrimination and freedom from exploitation. It also points to measures adopted by the Government of Canada to prevent the use and spread of illicit drugs, money laundering and terrorism, and it describes efforts to promote regional dialogue with a view to strengthening the inter-American system, banning anti-personnel mines, promoting transparency in defence matters, increasing co-operation with United Nations peacekeeping efforts, strengthening international disaster response capacity, and addressing the special concerns of small island states.

The Government of Canada has made efforts to provide quality and fair labour policies, laws, programs and assistance. Measures have included providing temporary income replacement for insured workers who become involuntarily unemployed; developing, administering and enforcing legislation and regulations related to wages, the workplace and working conditions; respecting and incorporating socially disadvantaged groups such as women, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and visible minorities; and providing accurate and timely labour market and career information.

Canada is committed to economic integration and free trade as a means of stimulating economic growth in the Hemisphere. The Government of Canada has undertaken to conduct the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations openly and inclusively, and to consult with Canadians throughout the FTAA process. Consultations will ensure that Canada's positions and priorities reflect the concerns and interests of Canadians and that there is broad public understanding and support for the FTAA.

Canada believes that well-functioning financial markets are key to promoting growth and to reducing countries' vulnerability to crises. Consequently, it is working to strengthen, modernize and integrate financial markets across the Hemisphere and to implement universal standards and codes, especially in the area of financial supervision and regulation. Canada is also working with its hemispheric partners on a number of other fronts — including science and technology, regional energy co-operation, climate change, telecommunications and transportation — all of which are related to and/or have an impact on the overall development and economic integration of countries in the region.

In response to changes in the economic environment — including the impact of information technology, connectedness and an opening of trade — and recognizing the vital role that small businesses play in the Canadian economy, Canada has moved toward creating conditions conducive to private sector growth. The goal is to encourage the development of successful micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, which in turn is helping to increase incomes.

Both domestically and internationally, Canada is a strong advocate for vulnerable groups. Since 1988, Canada's Gender Equality Funds have supported international commitments made in the areas of poverty reduction, political participation, economic empowerment, violence, health and education. Canada has strong legislation aimed at eliminating discrimination and violence against women and guaranteeing the rights of children, and promotes various initiatives to improve the health conditions and well-being of women and children. At the international level, Canada works actively at the United Nations toward the elimination of violence against women and children, and through the International Labour Organization to support non-discrimination in employment and the elimination of child exploitation. On the hemispheric front, funds have improved the economic and living conditions of rural women, supported programs against domestic violence, increased the political participation of women, helped train police and judicial officials, and provided health care and safe houses for victims of domestic violence.

Canada is working hard to create new opportunities for Aboriginal people. Through a variety of initiatives, the federal government is promoting self-sufficiency and economic development; developing labour and training programs to help Aboriginal people prepare for, find and keep jobs; improving access to health care; and supporting Aboriginal education and language programs. Canada also plays a key role in promoting Aboriginal issues at the international level, bilaterally and multilaterally, through institutions such as the United Nations and Organization of American States.

To reduce poverty and contribute to a more secure, equitable and prosperous world, Canada's Official Development Assistance Program supports developing countries through programs and projects that flow from the plans of action developed at the Miami and Santiago Summits. Canadian activities aim to promote a politically stable, economically liberal and socially equitable region, free of environmental degradation.

Canada is proud of its achievements in supporting the Summits of the Americas. The issues are difficult and complex, but action on Summit mandates is making a tangible difference in the lives of millions of people. This report demonstrates some of the significant strides made by the Government of Canada, both at home and abroad, in the areas of education, justice and human rights, economic integration and free trade, and the eradication of poverty and discrimination. While not exhaustive, the examples presented do serve to illustrate Canada's commitment to the citizens of Canada and the peoples of the Americas. In an ongoing effort to fulfil its commitment, Canada is playing a leading role in building a stronger, more unified and prosperous Hemisphere.

# ANNEX

*The following document is the complete text of the Plan of Action signed by the Heads of State and Government participating in the Second Summit of the Americas*

# SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS
# PLAN OF ACTION II

We, the democratically elected Heads of State and Government of the Americas, recognizing the need to make a collective effort that complements the actions being developed and executed at the national level to improve the economic well-being and the quality of life of our peoples, mindful of our commitment to the continued implementation of the Miami Plan of Action, affirm our resolute determination to carry out this Plan of Action, which constitutes a body of concrete initiatives intended to promote the overall development of the countries of the Hemisphere and ensure access to and improve the quality of education, promote and strengthen democracy and the respect for human rights, deepen economic integration and free trade and eradicate poverty and discrimination. We have adopted this Plan of Action conscious that all the initiatives are inter-related and equally important to the attainment of our common endeavour.

## I. EDUCATION: THE KEY TO PROGRESS

The Hemisphere's commitment to education is reflected in the sweeping reform processes encompassing all levels of educational systems, and is based on broad consensus with respect to the problems confronting education and the shared commitment and effort of societies as a whole to overcome them. These processes are based on the principles of equity, quality, relevance and efficiency. Equity is defined as the creation of conditions that ensure that all people have the opportunity to receive quality education services, thereby significantly reducing the effects of inequalities based on socio-economic status, disability and ethnic, cultural and gender discrimination. Quality implies the achievement of high levels of cognitive development, skills, capabilities and ethical attitudes. Relevance is defined as the ability of an educational system to meet the needs and aspirations of society as a whole, taking into account its social, cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity. Lastly, efficiency is defined as the provision of adequate resources, used optimally, in order to enhance educational achievements.

Therefore, the Governments, fully recognizing and respecting national sovereignty and the responsibilities of the institutions of our respective countries with regard to education, reiterate the commitment of the Miami Summit to ensure, by the year 2010, universal access to and completion of quality primary education for 100 percent of children and access for at least 75 percent of young people to quality secondary education, with increasing percentages of young people who complete secondary education, and assume responsibility for providing the general population with opportunities for life-long learning. If these objectives are met, we are confident that we will provide our people with the tools, skills and knowledge necessary for and suited to the development of capabilities that ensure better conditions of competitiveness and productivity required by modern economies, thus allowing our people to contribute as worthy citizens to their respective societies.

To achieve these objectives, Governments will:

– Implement targeted and inter-sectoral educational policies, as necessary, and develop programs that focus specifically on groups at a disadvantage in the areas of education, functional illiteracy and socio-economic conditions, with attention to women, minorities and vulnerable populations. Inter-sectoral programs in education, health and nutrition, as well as early childhood educational strategies, will be priorities, inasmuch as they contribute more directly to plans to combat poverty.

– Establish or strengthen national or subnational and, where applicable, subregional systems to evaluate the quality of education, which permit assessment of the performance of various educational actors, innovations and factors associated with achievements in learning. To that end, information and national or sub-national or, where applicable, subregional indicators will be made available that can be used to design, carry out and evaluate quality-improvement programs based on equity. Standards for reading and writing, mathematics and science shall receive special attention. Also, where appropriate, criteria and methodologies for collecting data that permit comparison of some educational indicators across countries in the Hemisphere shall be established.

– Develop comprehensive programs to improve and increase the level of professionalism among teachers and school administrators that combine pre-service and in-service training, exploring incentive mechanisms tied to updating their skills and to meeting such standards as may have been agreed upon. Higher education must collaborate in this endeavour through research and pedagogy, both of which should be strengthened in order to meet this goal.

– Strengthen education management and institutional capacity at the national, regional, local and school levels, furthering, where appropriate, decentralization and the promotion of better forms of community and family involvement. Encourage the mass media to contribute to bolstering efforts being made by educational systems.

– Strengthen preparation, education and training for the world of work so that an increasing number of workers can improve their standard of living and, together with employers, have the opportunity to benefit from hemispheric integration. In this regard, consideration will be given to the adoption of new technology based on different options and alternatives, ranging from specific occupational training to strengthening general employability competencies. Special attention will also be paid to the establishment or strengthening of mechanisms that permit workers to obtain certification of job-related competencies acquired through formal education and work experience. In order to confront changes in the labor market and to enhance employability prospects, actions that take into account the development of entrepreneurial skills will be included and will involve the different sectors and offer various options and alternatives.

– Establish or improve, according to their internal legal framework, educational strategies relevant to multicultural societies, so as to be able to shape, with the participation of indigenous populations and migrants, models for bilingual and intercultural basic education. Similarly, the content of basic education will have to be enhanced, together with respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity of peoples, as well as to expand the knowledge of the different languages spoken in the countries of the Hemisphere, where resources and possibilities permit.

– Develop, within and outside schools, with the assistance of families and other actors and social organizations, educational strategies that foster the development of values, with special attention to the inclusion of democratic principles, human rights, gender-related issues, peace, tolerance and respect for the environment and natural resources.

– Promote access to and use of the most effective information and communication technologies in education systems, with special emphasis on the use of computers, in combination with revised pedagogical methods and proper training for teachers in the use of these technologies. Special attention shall be paid to the ethical imperative of including the most vulnerable sectors. To that end, distance education programs shall be strengthened and information networks established.

– Make efforts to increase the availability of teaching materials in collaboration with official institutions and, depending on the specific conditions in each country, with the private sector.

– Seek to use technology to link schools and communities as a way of establishing ties in the Hemisphere while encouraging the participation of higher education institutions that have advantages in this field.

– Further scholarship and exchange programs for students, teachers, researchers and educational administrators using different strategies, including institution-to-institution ties, communications technology and internships which permit exposure to pedagogical and management innovations in the other countries of the Hemisphere. This will contribute to strengthening the institutional capacity of Ministries or Departments of Education, decentralized administrative entities and centers of higher learning.

### Funding, Horizontal Multilateral Cooperation Strategies and Follow-up

We, the Heads of State and Government, recognizing the cardinal importance of education as a foundation for development, agree, in accordance with our respective legislative processes, to promote allocation of the resources necessary for educational expenditure with a view to attaining greater levels of equity, quality, relevance and efficiency in the educational processes, emphasizing the optimal use of resources and a greater participation of other social actors.

We also reaffirm our commitment to promote horizontal and multilateral cooperation in the area of education. To that end, we:

– Instruct the Organization of American States (OAS) and request the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and World Bank, together with the other national and multilateral technical and financial cooperation agencies operating in the Hemisphere, to provide, within their respective areas of action, support for programs and initiatives that are consistent with the goals, objectives, and actions proposed in this Chapter of the Plan of Action. To this end, the IDB is encouraged to work with member countries to substantially increase the share of new lending for primary and secondary education, by more than doubling the quantity over the next three years, compared to the previous three years. We also request that the IDB establish a special regional fund for education in the Hemisphere, utilizing the existing resources of this institution. This fund would support efforts to raise educational standards and performance throughout the Region.

– Instruct the OAS and request the IDB, the World Bank, and United Nations Economic Commission on Latin-American and the Caribbean (ECLAC), among other institutions, to use the mechanisms within their scope to develop and strengthen regional cooperation in areas such as distance education, using, among other means, satellite technology; internships and exchange programs; the development and use of information technology for education; the updating of education statistics; and quality assessment, while striving to ensure that this cooperation is in keeping with the specific needs of each country. We recognize the role and interest in these efforts of specialized international organizations, such as United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Likewise, we recognize the contributions of the private sector, philanthropic foundations, and pertinent non-governmental organizations.

– Instruct the OAS to foster, articulate and facilitate, through ministerial meetings and other mechanisms being developed by member States in the framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), collaboration and joint effort in the Hemisphere and, to that end, to convene, in consultation with the coordinating countries, technical consultation forums of the countries in the Hemisphere in order to contribute to the implementation of the commitments included in this Chapter of the Plan of Action.

– Entrust the Meeting of Ministers of Education, to be convened by the OAS within the framework of CIDI's Strategic Plan for Partnership for Development, to be held in Brazil in July 1998, with the development of an implementation plan for this education initiative.

– Instruct the OAS and request the IDB, World Bank, ECLAC, and other multilateral institutions to report on the execution of this Plan to the Government representatives responsible for review and follow-up of the commitments of the Summit of the Americas.

## II. PRESERVING AND STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY, JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The strengthening of democracy, justice and human rights is a vital hemispheric priority. In this Plan of Action, we endorse new initiatives designed to deepen our commitment to these important principles. Specifically, we will intensify our efforts to promote democratic reforms at the regional and local level, protect the rights of migrant workers and their families, improve the capabilities of our justice systems and labor ministries to respond to the needs of our peoples, and encourage a strong and active civil society. We further resolve to defend democracy against the serious threats of corruption, terrorism, and illegal narcotics, and to promote peace and security among our nations. Taken together, these measures consolidate our democratic gains, reaffirm our commitment to democratic institutions, and commit us to building a Hemisphere of shared values.

## Democracy and Human Rights

Governments will:

– Define and develop, with the participation of civil society, comprehensive policies aimed at promoting and protecting human rights at a domestic level, in accordance with relevant international norms and principles, incorporating those policies, where appropriate, into national human rights plans and programs, as recommended by the World Conference of Vienna, 1993; and underscore as well the importance of promoting respect for the universally recognized principles of international humanitarian law.

– Guarantee that all individuals have the right to due process of law, including the presumption of innocence and the right to trial within a reasonable period of time and the full respect for their constitutional and other legal rights. Governments will, in accordance with their legal framework, adopt measures intended to ensure that no person awaiting trial shall be detained for a period longer than permitted by law, taking fully into account the rights of the accused, the protection of society, crime prevention, the promotion of respect for the law, the rights of victims and other relevant considerations. Governments will continue their efforts to improve conditions of detention and enhance human rights education for the respective officials involved in the administration of justice.

– Promote a review of their respective national legislation in order to eliminate or amend those provisions which may lead to any type of discrimination, for any reason, in contravention of their international commitments. In particular, they will seek to attain legal equality between men and women by the year 2002. In this context, priority should be given to the rights to equal treatment in the workplace, property, inheritance and child custody, as well as combatting domestic violence.

– Promote the adoption of legal, educational and social measures, as well as international cooperation, to combat the physical and sexual abuse of children, traffic in minors, child prostitution and child exploitation in all its forms, including pornography. At the same time, they will strengthen international cooperation through the implementation of a regional information system on affected children, based on national information systems, with the participation of and promotion by concerned international organizations, to analyze their condition and evaluate social policies to facilitate decision making in this sphere.

– Promote the signature, ratification and accession to international human rights instruments to which they are not party, as well as observe the provisions contained in the instruments to which they are party.

Governments will also enhance cooperation with and support for the activities of the Organization of American States (OAS) in order to:

– Strengthen the inter-American human rights system through concrete initiatives and measures which aim to reinforce its institutional structure and promote its links with national systems and regional entities that promote and protect human rights. In this context, Governments consider important the institutional strengthening of the Inter-American Human Rights Institute.

– Support States that so request in the processes of promoting and consolidating democratic values, practices and institutions by strengthening the respective organs of the Organization, including the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD).

– Strengthen the exercise of and respect for all human rights and the consolidation of democracy, including the fundamental right to freedom of expression and thought, through support for the activities of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in this field, in particular the recently created Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression.

– Promote programs of cooperation, through the use of advanced information technology and with the support of the international institutions that deal with administration of justice, in areas identified by the OAS Working Group on Democracy and Human Rights, which include:

- Training of police and correctional officers;
- Necessary steps to remedy inhumane conditions in prisons and reduce drastically the number of pre-trial detainees; and
- Enhancing human rights education for judges, magistrates and other court officials.

**Education for Democracy**

Governments will:

– Include in educational programs, within the legal framework of each country, objectives and contents that develop democratic culture at all levels, in order to teach individuals ethical values, a spirit of cooperation and integrity. To that end, the participation of teachers, families, students and outreach workers will be stepped up in their work related to conceptualizing and implementing the plans for shaping citizens imbued with democratic values.

## Civil Society

Governments will:

– Promote, with the participation of civil society, the development of principles and recommendations for institutional frameworks to stimulate the formation of responsible and transparent, non-profit and other civil society organizations, including, where appropriate, programs for volunteers, and encourage, in accordance with national priorities, public sector-civil society dialogue and partnerships in the areas that are considered pertinent in this Plan of Action. In this context the Organization of American States (OAS) may serve as a forum for the exchange of experiences and information.

– In this process, draw upon existing initiatives that promote increased participation of civil society in public issues, such as relevant successful experiences from the National Councils for Sustainable Development and the Inter-American Strategy for Public Participation, among others. As soon as possible, Governments will adopt work plans to implement legal and institutional frameworks based on the principles and recommendations in their respective countries.

– Entrust the OAS to encourage support among Governments and civil society organizations, and to promote appropriate programs to carry out this initiative, and request the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to develop and implement, along with interested States and other inter-American institutions, hemispheric financial mechanisms specially devoted to the implementation of programs oriented toward strengthening civil society and public participation mechanisms.

## Migrant Workers

Governments will:

– Reaffirm that the promotion and protection of human rights and the fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction by reasons of race, gender, language, nationality, or religion, is a priority for the international community and is the responsibility of every state.

– Comply with the applicable international human rights instruments and, consistent with the legal framework of each country, guarantee the human rights of all migrants, including migrant workers and their families.

– Seek full compliance with, and protection of, the human rights of all migrants, including migrant workers, and their families, and adopt effective measures, including the strengthening of public awareness, to prevent and eradicate violations of human rights and eliminate all forms of discrimination against them, particularly racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance.

– Reaffirm the sovereign right of each State to formulate and apply its own legal framework and policies for migration, including the granting of permission to migrants to enter, stay, or exercise economic activity, in full conformity with applicable international instruments relating to human rights and in a spirit of cooperation.

– Seek full respect for, and compliance with, the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, especially as it relates to the right of nationals, regardless of their immigration status, to communicate with a consular officer of their own State in case of detention.

– Protect the rights of all migrant workers and their families, consistent with each country's internal legal framework, by taking steps, in case they do not exist, to: 1) provide, with respect to working conditions, the same legal protection as for national workers; 2) facilitate, as appropriate, the payment of full wages owed when the worker has returned to his/her country, and allow them to arrange the transfer of their personal effects; 3) recognize the rights of citizenship and nationality of the children of all migrant workers who may be entitled to such rights, and any other rights they may have in each country; 4) encourage the negotiation of bilateral or multilateral agreements, regarding the remission of social security benefits accrued by migrant workers; 5) protect all migrant workers and their families, through law enforcement and information campaigns, from becoming victims of exploitation and abuse from alien smuggling; 6) prevent abuse and mistreatment of all migrant workers by employers or any authorities entrusted with the enforcement of migration policies and border control; and 7) encourage and promote respect for the cultural identity of all migrants.

– Support the activities of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights with regard to the protection of the rights of migrant workers and their families, particularly through the Special Rapporteur for Migrant Workers.

## Strengthening Municipal and Regional Administrations

Governments will:

– Within their legal framework and within a reasonable time, establish or strengthen mechanisms for the participation of groups of society in the process of local and other subnational decision-making, such as open public hearings and public budget reviews, and promote transparency in local and other subnational Government finance operations.

– In accordance with legislation at all levels, provide for financing options for local and other subnational Governments, including groups of local Governments, such as through transfers of national revenue, access to private capital markets, and authority for raising revenue locally, in order to expand the delivery of quality services as well as provide for training opportunities to strengthen local and other subnational administrative capabilities.

– In accordance with circumstances and the legal framework of each country, study the possible transfer of additional national governmental functions to local and other subnational levels as well as the possibility for enhancing such authorities.

– Share their experiences and information from existing and future programs supported by multilateral and bilateral cooperation institutions such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank, to facilitate the implementation of this initiative.

## Corruption

Governments will:

– Resolutely support the "Inter-American Program to Combat Corruption" and implement the actions established therein, particularly the adoption of a strategy to achieve prompt ratification of the 1996 Inter-American Convention against Corruption, the drafting of codes of conduct for public officials, in accordance with respective legal frameworks, the study of the problem of laundering assets or proceeds derived from corruption, and the promotion of information campaigns on the ethical values that sustain the democratic system.

– Sponsor in Chile a Symposium on Enhancing Probity in the Hemisphere to be held no later than August 1998, in order to consider, among other topics, the scope of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption, and the implementation of the aforementioned program. They will also resolutely support the holding of workshops sponsored by the Organization of American States (OAS) to disseminate the provisions set forth in the Inter-American Convention against Corruption.

– Foster within the OAS framework, and in accordance with the mandate set forth in the Inter-American Program to Combat Corruption, appropriate follow-up on the progress achieved under the Inter-American Convention against Corruption.

– Promote in their domestic legislation the obligation for senior public officials, and those at other levels when the law so establishes, to declare or disclose their personal assets and liabilities to the appropriate agency.

– Encourage the approval of effective and specific measures to combat all forms of corruption, bribery, and related unlawful practices in commercial transactions, among others.

## Financing of Electoral Campaigns

Governments will:

– Propose the exchange of experiences that may be used as a support for each country so that, according to their own realities and legal systems, they adopt or develop internal rules that regulate contributions to electoral campaigns and independent internal control mechanisms.

– Consider the proposals resulting from the Meeting of Government Representatives on Contributions to Electoral Campaigns, held in Caracas in February 1998, under the auspices of the OAS.

– Adopt or consider, as appropriate, measures to prevent financial contributions to electoral campaigns derived from organized crime and drug trafficking. Similarly, they will promote the adoption of measures designed to ensure transparency in the origin of all contributions.

## Prevention and Control of Illicit Consumption of and Traffic in Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and other Related Crimes

Governments will:

– Continue to develop their national and multilateral efforts in order to achieve full application of the Hemispheric Anti-Drug Strategy, and will strengthen this alliance based on the principles of respect for the sovereignty and territorial jurisdiction of the States, reciprocity, shared responsibility and an integrated, balanced approach in conformity with their domestic laws.

– With the intention of strengthening mutual confidence, dialogue and hemispheric cooperation and on the basis of the aforementioned principles, develop, within the framework of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD-OAS), a singular and objective process of multilateral governmental evaluation in order to monitor the progress of their individual and collective efforts in the Hemisphere and of all the countries participating in the Summit, in dealing with the diverse manifestations of the problem.

– Strengthen national efforts and international cooperation in order to:

- **Enhance their national policies and plans with regard to the prevention of illicit drug consumption, and step up measures, particularly at the community level, in schools and those aimed at the most vulnerable groups, such as children and young people, in order to prevent the growth and spread of this consumption and to eliminate financial incentives to illicit trafficking;**
- **Develop appropriate treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration programs with a view to alleviating the serious social effects, human suffering and other adverse effects associated with drug abuse;**
- **Increase cooperation in areas such as the collection and analysis of data, standardization of systems that measure illicit consumption, scientific and technical training and exchange of experiences;**
- **Develop or encourage the development of campaigns to foster greater social awareness of the dangers of drug abuse for individuals, the family and society as well as community participation plans;**
- **Sensitize public opinion as to the serious effects of drug abuse and the activities of criminal organizations that deal with them, including at the wholesale and retail level;**
- **Improve and update cooperative mechanisms to prosecute and extradite individuals charged with the traffic in narcotics and psychotropic substances and other related crimes, in accordance with international agreements, constitutional requirements, and national laws;**
- **Establish or strengthen existing, duly trained and equipped specialized central units responsible for requesting, analyzing and exchanging among the**

competent State authorities information relating to the laundering of the proceeds, assets and instrumentalities used in criminal activities (also known as money laundering);

- Reinforce international and national control mechanisms to impede the illicit traffic and diversion of chemical precursors;

- Promote the rapid ratification and entry into force of the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Production and Trafficking of Firearms; promote the approval and prompt application of the Model Regulations on the Control of Arms and Explosives Connected with Drug Trafficking of CICAD; encourage States, that have not already done so, to adopt the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure effective international cooperation to prevent and combat illicit transnational traffic in firearms and ammunition, while establishing, or strengthening, systems to enhance the tracing of firearms used in criminal activity; and eliminate illicit crops through the increased support of national alternative development programs as well as eradication and interdiction.

– Strengthen national drug control commissions, with a view to improving coordination in each country in the planning and implementation of their respective national plans and in streamlining international assistance in this area.

– Underscore the valuable contribution of civil society, through its different organizations, in the areas of prevention of illicit consumption, treatment, rehabilitation, and social reintegration of drug addicts.

– Encourage financial institutions to redouble their efforts to prevent money laundering and the appropriate business sectors to strengthen its controls to prevent the diversion of chemical precursors.

– Give full support to the upcoming Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly which will be held in June 1998 for the purpose of promoting international cooperation with respect to illicit drugs and related crimes and encourage all States to participate actively, at the highest level, in that international meeting. They will make every effort to ensure effective implementation of international narcotics agreements to which they have subscribed, at regional and subregional levels, and for these to operate in consonance with the hemispheric effort and reaffirm their support for CICAD and its fundamental role in the implementation of these agreements.

### Terrorism

Governments will:

– Take measures, as agreed in the Declaration and Plan of Action of Lima, in order to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism, applying for that purpose the most decisive will to comply with the general objectives set forth therein.

– Encourage States that have not yet done so to sign, ratify, or accede to, as appropriate, the international conventions related to terrorism, in accordance with their respective internal legislation.

– Convene, under the auspices of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Second Specialized Inter-American Conference to evaluate the progress attained and to define future courses of action for the prevention, combat and elimination of terrorism.

### Building Confidence and Security Among States

Governments will:

– Promote regional dialogue with a view to revitalizing and strengthening the institutions of the Inter-American system, taking into account the new political, economic, social and strategic-military factors in the Hemisphere and in its subRegions. To that end, they will seek to expand further a climate of confidence and security among the States of the Hemisphere.

– Carry out, in the manner in which they are set forth, the measures and recommendations resulting from the Regional Conferences on Confidence and Security Building Measures, held in November 1995, in Santiago, Chile, and in February 1998, in San Salvador, El Salvador, under the auspices of the Organization of American States (OAS).

– Continue to support the efforts of small-island States to address their special security concerns, which are multidimensional in nature, and economic, financial, and environmental matters, taking into account the vulnerability and level of development of these States.

– In furtherance of efforts to transform the Western Hemisphere into an antipersonnel mine-free zone, and in recognition of the contribution in this regard of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, including its early entry into force, they will encourage actions and support international humanitarian demining efforts in this area, with the goal of ensuring that priority is given to mines that threaten civilians and of ensuring that land can be restored for productive purpose. The latter will take place through effective regional and international cooperation and coordination, as requested by the affected States, to survey, mark, map, and remove mines; effective mine awareness for the civilian population and assistance to victims; and development and deployment of new mine detection and clearance technologies, as appropriate.

– Continue promoting transparency in matters related to defense policy, among other aspects, with regard to modernizing the Armed Forces, comparing military expenditure in the Region, and strengthening the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

– Increase cooperation with United Nations peacekeeping efforts.

– Encourage the development of cooperative programs to deal with natural disasters and humanitarian search and rescue operations.

– Pledge their efforts to ensure that the peaceful resolution of pending conflicts and disputes is achieved through existing mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes within the Inter-American System and in keeping with international law and treaties in force, and express that said mechanisms and instruments should be strengthened.

– Acknowledge the value of ministerial or high-level meetings on the topics of international defense and security, such as the Defense Ministerials of Williamsburg and Bariloche, as an important contribution to regional dialogue on these matters, and, in this context, encourage interested countries to hold other meetings.

– Entrust the OAS, through the Committee on the Hemispheric Security, to:

- Follow up on and expand topics relating to confidence and security building measures;
- Analyze the meaning, scope, and implications of international security concepts in the Hemisphere, with a view to developing the most appropriate common approaches by which to manage their various aspects, including disarmament and arms control; and
- Pinpoint ways to revitalize and strengthen the institutions of the Inter-American System related to the various aspects of Hemispheric Security.

This process will culminate in a Special Conference on Security, within the framework of the OAS, to be held, at the latest, at the beginning of the next decade.

– Support the convening of a follow-up Regional Conference to the Santiago and San Salvador Regional Conferences on Confidence and Security Building Measures, to further build mutual confidence in the Americas.

The progress achieved in these matters will be reported to States, thereby ensuring appropriate follow-up through the OAS, so that these topics may be discussed at the next Summit of the Americas.

## Strengthening of Justice Systems and Judiciaries

Governments will:

– Develop mechanisms that permit easy and timely access to justice by all persons, with particular reference to persons with low income, by adopting measures to enhance the transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the courts. In this context, they will promote, develop and integrate the use of alternative methods of conflict resolution in the justice system.

– Strengthen, as appropriate, systems of criminal justice founded on the independence of the judiciary and the effectiveness of public prosecutors and defense counsels, recognizing the special importance of the introduction of oral proceedings in those countries that consider it necessary to implement this reform.

– Step up efforts to combat organized crime, and transnational crime, and, if necessary, foster new laws and international conventions, as well as procedures and mechanisms for continuing to combat these scourges.

– Adapt legislation and proceed, as soon as possible, with necessary institutional reforms and measures to guarantee the comprehensive protection of the rights of children and youths to meet the obligations established under the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child and other international instruments.

– Adopt as appropriate a clear distinction between procedures and consequences of violations of criminal law and measures established to protect children and youths whose rights are threatened or violated, and will promote social and educational measures to rehabilitate young offenders.

– Foster the establishment and strengthening of specialized tribunals or courts for family matters, as appropriate, and in accordance with their respective legal systems.

– Expedite the establishment of a justice studies center of the Americas, which will facilitate training of justice sector personnel, the exchange of information and other forms of technical cooperation in the Hemisphere, in response to particular requirements of each country. To this end, they request the Ministers of Justice or other competent authorities to analyze and define the most suitable actions for the organization and establishment for such a center.

– Promote, in accordance with the legislation of each country, mutual legal and judicial assistance that is effective and responsive, particularly with respect to extraditions, requests for the delivery of documents and other evidentiary materials, and other bilateral or multilateral exchanges in this field, such as witness protection arrangements.

– Support the convening of periodic meetings of Ministers of Justice and Attorneys General of the Hemisphere within the framework of the Organization of American States (OAS).

### Modernization of the State in Labor Matters

Governments will:

– Promote measures by their Ministries of Labor to provide high quality programs and assistance for workers and employers, placing emphasis on greater decentralization of their functions, the incorporation of new technologies, active labor market policies, better and more timely information regarding the labor market, and improvement of safety and health conditions in the workplace.

– Give special attention to the incorporation of socially-disadvantaged groups into the workforce, including women, minorities, youth, the disabled and other vulnerable populations, and to the services offered by the Ministries of Labor that take into consideration their special needs. At the same time, Governments will further strengthen their overall efforts, and coordination among involved agencies, to address the issue of children at work. The Ministries of Labor will exchange experiences on best practices in these areas.

– Take actions towards assuring that the Ministries of Labor have the necessary means to carry out this Plan of Action in areas within their jurisdiction.

– Request the participation of the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Organization of American States (OAS) to assist Labor Ministries to support international activities and exchange information on modernization methods and strategies.

## III. ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND FREE TRADE

### A. Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)

I. We instruct our Ministers Responsible for Trade to take the following actions:

– 1. Initiate the negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), in accordance with the principles, objectives, structure, modalities and all other decisions as set out in the San José Ministerial Declaration, by convening the Trade Negotiations Committee no later than June 30, 1998, and the Negotiating Groups no later than September 30, 1998.

– 2. Exercise the ultimate oversight and management of the negotiations.

– 3. Achieve concrete progress in the negotiations by the year 2000 and agree on specific business facilitation measures to be adopted before the end of the century.

– 4. Ensure that the negotiating process is transparent and takes into account the differences in the levels of development and size of the economies in the Americas, in order to create opportunities for the full participation of all countries, including the smaller economies.

– 5. Conduct the negotiations in such a manner as to build broad public understanding of and support for the FTAA, and to consider views on trade matters from different sectors of our civil societies, such as business, labor, consumer, environmental and academic groups, presented to the committee of Government representatives established at the Fourth Meeting of Trade Ministers in Costa Rica.

II. We instruct our Representatives in the institutions of the Tripartite Committee, in particular the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), to allocate appropriate existing resources within those institutions to support the Administrative Secretariat for the FTAA negotiations.

III. We urge the Tripartite Committee to continue to respond positively to requests for technical support from FTAA entities. We ask the three institutions to consider requests for technical assistance related to FTAA issues from member countries -in particular from the smaller economies in order to facilitate their integration to the FTAA process- according to their respective procedures.

### B. Further Actions

In addition to initiating the negotiations for the FTAA, we have defined a series of further actions which must be consistent with the FTAA negotiation, aimed at deepening the process of economic integration, as well as to create opportunities for the full participation of all countries, including the smaller economies. We have prepared a series of proposals to advance the modernization of financial markets, programs of science and technology, energy cooperation, and hemispheric infrastructure, in particular in the fields of transportation and telecommunications.

### Strengthening, Modernizing and Integrating Financial Markets

Governments will:

– Strengthen banking supervision in the Hemisphere through: implementation of the Basle Core Principles for Effective Banking Supervision; training programs to strengthen supervisory capacity; and establishment of sound, high-quality reporting and disclosure standards for banks, and creation of a Working Group to assist countries in this process.

– Improve banking and securities market clearance and settlement systems in the Hemisphere, in order to facilitate the transparency, efficiency and security of internal and cross-border transactions.

### Science and Technology

Governments will:

– Recognize that science and technology are related to various areas and objectives of this Plan of Action within and beyond economic integration, free trade and sustainable development.

– Continue implementing the Cartagena Plan of Action, agreed to in 1996, with emphasis on strengthening the capacity of the countries in the Hemisphere to participate and benefit from the knowledge-based global economy, promoting, among other actions, the growth of the communications and information industries as strategic components of national and regional integration processes. In the context of the Cartagena Declaration, recognize the important role that existing regional institutions play in implementing this Plan of Action.

– Apply science and technology to mitigate the damages caused by the effects of "El Niño" and other natural hazards, such as volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, earthquakes, and floods, and their impact on the economy and ecosystems, based on improved forecasting, prevention and response capacity, improved research and training methods to deal with natural hazards, and the application of science and technology to address the effects of climate variability on health, agriculture and water. In this context, cooperative research and exchange of information about "El Niño" and other natural hazards will be emphasized.

– Support the development and use of science, technology and innovation indicators in fulfillment of the Cartagena Plan.

– Promote actions to foster alliances among all sectors of society to advance cooperation and innovation in science and technology. It is recognized that university-industry relations, training in technology management and other human resource development programs, as well as participation of small and medium-sized companies, are important elements for utilizing science and technology to achieve hemispheric objectives.

### Regional Energy Cooperation

In accordance with the legal and constitutional rules of every State, as well as with the commitments that our Governments assume in the context of the negotiations of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), in order to ensure sustainable energy development and further the energy integration of the Hemisphere,

Governments will:

– Promote policies and processes that facilitate the trade of products, goods and services related to the energy sector.

– Give impetus to, in the shortest possible time, policies and processes that facilitate the development of infrastructure, including across international boundaries, to further the integration of energy markets.

– Foster the creation and strengthening of transparent and predictable regulatory systems, which take into account the needs of the different parties involved.

– Promote legal, fiscal and regulatory systems in order to stimulate local and foreign private investment in the energy sector in those areas permitted by respective Constitutions.

– Increase access of rural inhabitants to energy services.

– Support policies and programs that will stimulate the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

To support these actions, we will continue our cooperation efforts through the Hemispheric Energy Initiative.

### Climate Change

Governments will:

In light of their commitments in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the decisions made at the Third Conference of Parties in Kyoto, Japan, and in view of the Fourth Conference of Parties to be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in November, 1998:

– Encourage the Parties to work toward achieving the objectives and goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

– Recognize the key role that technology plays in managing the environmental aspects related to energy, and encourage the exchange of technology, information and experiences, as well as share views on the Clean Development Mechanism.

### Hemispheric Infrastructure

#### A. General Infrastructure

Governments will:

– Charge the Inter-American Development Bank with the preparation of a draft set of voluntary principles to be adopted by each of the countries, to facilitate private sector participation in local and transnational infrastructure projects, that can serve as a basis for bilateral and multilateral agreements. This draft will be submitted to Governments not later than December 1998, to be further discussed during a meeting of ministers responsible for infrastructure to be held in 1999.

#### B. Transportation

Governments will:

– Undertake the necessary actions to implement, to the fullest extent possible, and taking into account subregional sectoral agreements, decisions, and projects, the Joint Ministerial Declaration of the Second Hemispheric Summit on Transportation, held in Santiago, Chile, in April 1996, aimed at: a) promoting market-oriented, integrated, financially viable, and environmentally sustainable transportation systems and services, and b) providing safe, efficient, and reliable passenger and cargo services that foster the economic growth and development of our countries.

– Develop a plan aimed at ensuring the highest level of safety in air, sea and land transportation systems, improving infrastructure and increasing environmental protection by improving compliance with international standards and recommended practices established, such as those established by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

– Engage in discussions to develop a cooperation program, taking into account the Santiago and San Salvador Declarations of the Regional Conferences on Confidence and Security Building Measures, which would address maritime and air transport of nuclear and other hazardous wastes and, where appropriate, work with the relevant international organizations to strengthen or develop standards governing the transport of such goods and its safety.

– Prepare a profile, with the cooperation of United Nations Economic Commission on Latin-American and the Caribbean (ECLAC), of regional transportation systems and services taking into account agreements, decisions, projects and studies already prepared by regional and hemispheric organizations. Such a profile will identify the main problems and opportunities faced by the countries in the Hemisphere as a first step toward establishing regional transportation priorities and policies, with respect to, among other things, the harmonization of standards and the exchange of technology.

– Seek, from international financial institutions, resources necessary to undertake, as soon as possible, transportation infrastructure projects in the Americas, including those which take into account the specific needs of the smallest economies.

## C. Telecommunications

Governments will:

– Establish strategies to support the development and continuous updating of a regional telecommunications infrastructure plan, taking into account national plans, the need for universal access to basic telecommunications services throughout the Region and the evolution of Global Information Society.

– Work together in close cooperation with the private sector to rapidly build out the telecommunications infrastructure in the Region, adopting strategies to make affordable access available to all for basic telephone service and the INTERNET, such as implementing the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission (CITEL) guidelines on value added services and encouraging, the development of community information service centers that provide access to basic telephone and value-added services, computers, the INTERNET and multimedia services bearing in mind the diverse needs of the countries of the Region and divergent levels of development.

– Promote, in cooperation with the private sector, the exchange and distribution of information concerning regulatory matters such as universal access/service, interconnection and the establishment of independent regulatory bodies, taking into account the commitments made in the World Trade Organization's Agreements on Trade in Basic Telecommunications Services (the GBT Agreement), developments in the Free Trade Area of the Americas process, and the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the 1996 Senior

Telecommunications Officials Meeting held in Washington D.C. with a view to developing, wherever possible, and subject to national consraints, best practice guidelines and requesting when needed the assistance of CITEL, regional telecommunications organizations, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and others as appropriate.

– Foster, together with the private sector, the development of applications over electronic networks, such as the INTERNET, broadcast television and radio, that taking into account different socio-economic conditions and languages, will support education, health, agriculture and sustainable rural development, electronic commerce and other applications assisting small savers, Micro-enterprises and Small and Medium-size Enterprises (SMEs) and modernization of the State.

– Encourage CITEL to address, with some urgency, studies of the standards coordination aspects of the telecommunications infrastructure, including the areas of Telecommunications Management Network (TMN) and Intelligent Networks (IN) so that the network can evolve to meet the interconnection requirements and to support the implementation of new applications in the regional context.

– Continue to examine ways to develop consistent regulatory approaches among member countries leading to the promotion of greater commonality in the certification processes for telecommunications equipment and to the establishment of a framework and to move toward the negotiation and implementation of a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for telecommunications equipment encompassing all the countries of the Region.

## IV. ERADICATION OF POVERTY AND DISCRIMINATION

Extreme poverty and discrimination continue to afflict the lives of many of our families and impede their potential contribution to our nations' progress. To move toward a prosperous future for all, we will facilitate the provision of legal title to urban and rural properties and redouble our efforts to increase access to credit and to provide technical support for microenterprises, and protect the basic rights of workers. We will remove all forms of discrimination against women, indigenous communities, disadvantaged racial and ethnic minorities, and other vulnerable groups. We will seek to enhance the quality of life of all people of the Americas through efforts that ensure access to adequate health services, to improved health technologies, to clean water and proper nutrition. Taken together, these measures will facilitate the inclusion of all inhabitants, without exception, in the economic and democratic transformation of the Hemisphere.

### Fostering the Development of Micro, Small and Medium Size Enterprises

As a means to combat poverty and taking into account national differences, the Governments pledge to strengthen the development of micro, small and medium size enterprises by undertaking the following specific actions:

Governments will:

– Ensure that a significant number of the 50 million micro, small and medium size enterprises in the Hemisphere, whose owners and workers are persons with low incomes, especially women from these enterprises, have access to financial services by the year 2000.

– Design and implement programs, with the support of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and United Nations Economic Commission on Latin-America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and in coordination with the World Bank and other development cooperation agencies, that promote appropriate financial policy reforms that: accelerate the entry of formal-sector financial institutions into this market; support the development of institutions that work in the sector; and eliminate impediments that limit the access of micro, small and medium size enterprises to financial services.

– Simplify and expedite the procedures for registration, obtaining licenses, complying with labor and tax regulations, and the formalization, where appropriate, of micro, small and medium size enterprises.

– Support private-sector providers of non-financial services to enable them to expand access to new technologies and training for micro, small and medium size enterprises, which will permit them to enhance their competitiveness in national and global markets.

– Promote partnerships of micro, small, and medium size enterprises to allow them to take advantage of cooperative assistance in doing business and in modernizing business management.

– Promote inter-institutional coordination by creating effective interchange mechanisms between national and local public institutions that support micro, small and medium size enterprises and facilitating their links with the private sector.

– Design national plans for the achievement of the actions previously defined and convoke a regional meeting of ministers or senior officials responsible for public policies to support micro, small and medium size enterprises, for the purpose of exchanging information on those plans and thus improving the effectiveness of support policies. To this end, the IDB, in cooperation with ECLAC, will be asked to provide coordination for this meeting.

– Request that regional organizations and Government, multilateral, and bilateral development agencies involved in the Region assist in policy reform and invest between US$400-$500 million over the next three years in programs, including training and technical assistance, that support the actions identified in this Plan of Action.

### Property Registration

Governments will:

– Streamline and decentralize, as necessary, property registration procedures by: adopting transparent, simplified procedures for titling and registration; disseminating information regarding these procedures; utilizing, whenever feasible, state-of-the-art technologies for property georeferencing, computer-generated mapping and computerized records storage; incorporating alternative dispute resolution mechanisms; and avoiding overlapping administrative fees for titling and registration.

– Recommend that multilateral and bilateral cooperation institutions, especially the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank, strengthen their financial and technical assistance programs, including information exchange regarding experiences among countries, to support simplified property registration procedures and to assure access for the poor to those systems.

– In accord with national legal frameworks, implement measures, where necessary, to protect rights accorded to indigenous populations, as well as information programs, if needed, to assure greater awareness of indigenous populations of their rights, in this respect.

### Health Technologies

Governments will:

– Seek, through public and private efforts, or partnerships between them, to enhance the availability, access to, and quality of drugs and vaccines, especially for the most needy, by promoting efforts to safeguard the quality, rational selection and use, safety and efficacy of pharmaceutical products, with special emphasis on vital and essential drugs; and by supporting regional initiatives that by the year 2002 will facilitate research, development, production and utilization of vaccines, which will reduce the incidence of diseases, such as pneumonia, meningitis, measles, rubella and mumps.

– Strengthen and improve existing national and regional networks of health information and surveillance systems, so that stakeholders have access to data to address critical health issues in the Region, in order to make appropriate clinical and managerial decisions. They will address the development, implementation ad evaluation of needs-based health information systems and technology, including telecommunications, to support epidemiological surveillance, the operation and management of health services and programs, health education and promotion, telemedicine, computer networks and investment in new health technologies.

– Develop initiatives designed to reduce deficits in access to and quality of drinking water, basic sanitation and solid waste management, with special emphasis in rural and poor urban areas, by applying existing technologies or developing new, appropriate and effective low-cost technologies.

– Make every effort to ensure that the necessary resources are allocated for the development of the lines of action of this Plan, with the technical support of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). They also will promote bilateral and multilateral collaboration, and will request the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank, and other financial and technical cooperation institutions to support the programs and activities included in this initiative, according to their own specific priorities and fields of action.

– Develop mechanisms for evaluating the relevance, cost and efficacy of the technologies introduced to deal with these and other priority health problems.

**Women**

Governments will:

– Strengthen and establish, where they do not exist, national mechanisms and governmental organs, as well as the respective regional and subregional networks in charge of promoting legal equality and equality of opportunities between women and men, focused on gender equity, and provide them with adequate and timely financial resources to enable these entities to promote, coordinate and carry out the commitments undertaken by the States at the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and development, the World Summit on Social Development, the Summit of the Americas, the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the recent "Santiago Consensus" of the VII Regional Conference on Beijing Follow-up (ECLAC/UN).

– Examine the existing laws and their implementation in order to identify obstacles limiting the full participation of women in the political, economic, social and cultural life of our countries. Whenever necessary, promote reforms or create new laws to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and to guarantee the protection of children's rights.

– Implement and follow up on the commitments regarding the status of women as agreed to at the Summit of the Americas, with the support of the Inter-American Commission on Women (ICW), in collaboration with civil society, with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank, United Nations Economic Commission on Latin-America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and other entities of international cooperation, using when appropriate the System of Indicators adopted by the countries of the Americas at Montelimar, Nicaragua.

– Promote policies designed to improve women's health conditions and the quality of health services at every stage of their lives.

**Basic Rights of Workers**

Governments will:

– Exchange informational materials regarding their labor legislation, with the objective of contributing to better mutual knowledge of such legislation as well as to promote core labor standards recognized by the International Labor Organization (ILO) -freedom of association; the right to organize and bargain collectively; the prohibition of forced labor; the elimination of all exploitative forms of child labor; and non-discrimination in employment. Such information will also include references to the mechanisms and/or legal authorities of Ministries of Labor to implement core labor standards as a fundamental component of productive workplaces and positive labor-management relations.

– For these purposes carry out the exchanges by, among other means, furnishing informational materials on relevant changes to their labor legislation, mechanisms and/or legal authorities for implementation of core labor standards, and progress in the area of labor-management relations, to be provided at a meeting of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor, to be held in 1998 and their other meetings, as appropriate, including with the assistance of the Organization of American States (OAS), International Labor Organization (ILO) and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

– Further secure their observance and promotion of internationally recognized core labor standards. In this context, they recognize the ILO as the competent body to set and deal with these standards and support the ongoing work of the ILO with regard to exchanges of information and the negotiation of a new Declaration of Principles on Fundamental Rights of Workers and appropriate follow-up; believe that economic growth and development fostered by increased trade and further trade liberalization contribute to the promotion of these standards and should lead to higher levels of employment; similarly reject the use of labor standards for protectionist purposes, and, in this regard, note that the World Trade Organization (WTO) and ILO Secretariats shall continue their collaboration.

**Indigenous Populations**

To promote greater participation of indigenous populations in society through adequate access to education, health care, and occupational training, with the aim of improving their standard of living,

Governments will:

– Support activities in the field of education aimed at improving the participation of indigenous populations and communities in society. Such activities would seek to strengthen the identity of indigenous populations and promote respectful coexistence among different social groups in communities and States.

– Promote the widening of basic and secondary education services with training orientation, mainly in Regions with high percentages of indigenous populations, through greater support from Governments and international cooperation, at the request of interested Governments, so that indigenous and non-indigenous populations have the opportunity to receive technical training and contribute to the development of their countries. To the extent possible, the training areas which are implemented parallel to educational processes should respond to the needs of the Region and to productive strategies.

– In cooperation with regional organizations, development institutions and NGOs, actively support and promote capacity building activities and productive projects, including agriculture, handicrafts, small trade and industry and marketing. To the extent possible, these should be guided and administered by indigenous populations.

– Facilitate the organization of round-tables at the national and hemispheric level, in partnership with indigenous populations, with a view to promoting greater understanding of and cooperation in the areas of education and health, with a particular emphasis on women and children. Governments will also promote research initiatives on the relationship between indigenous population, poverty and development.

– Proceed with inter-governmental examination within the Organization of American States (OAS) framework of the "Proposed American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" prepared by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, with a view toward the possible adoption of a Declaration.

### Hunger and Malnutrition

Governments will:

– Give the highest priority to reducing infant malnutrition, concentrating efforts on health, nutrition and education programs for the nutrition of infants, particularly those less than three, as those are the years of greatest vulnerability. To that end, emphasis shall be given to adequate nutrition and the correction of specific nutritional deficiencies, specifically with vitamin and mineral supplements combined with greater use of vaccinations and immunizations and monitoring during the growth of the child.

– Give high priority to the nutritional and caloric needs of women before and during pregnancy and while they are breast-feeding. Governments therefore will promote breast-feeding as an important source of nutrition for babies. The nutritional needs of other high risk groups such as the elderly and the disabled will also be addressed.

– Continue, as far as possible, with the dialogue begun at the Inter-American Conference on Hunger, held in Buenos Aires in October 1996, and they will explore the application, in their respective jurisdictions of the measures suggested there, in particular the creation of alliances with the private sector to fight hunger and malnutrition, the creation of food bank networks with volunteer participation and the creation of an Honorary Council dedicated to fostering activities to reach Summit objectives in this area.

### Sustainable Development

– We recognize the effort made by the Organization of American States (OAS) in terms of follow-up of the Sustainable Development Summit, and instruct it, through the Inter-American Commission on Sustainable Development, to continue coordination related to fulfillment of its mandates. We ask the entities of the Inter-American System and the United Nations to strengthen cooperation related to implementation of the Santa Cruz Plan of Action.

### Cooperation

– With the intention of achieving a greater impact in our national and collective efforts, we charge national agencies and organizations responsible for international cooperation with supporting the preparation and implementation of programs and projects which flow from the Plan of Action. Moreover, we request the participation of the multilateral cooperation institutions with the same objective.

### Summit of the Americas Follow-up

– The Heads of State and Government will continue to meet periodically to deepen cooperation and understanding among the countries of the Americas, and, to that end, will strengthen the hemispheric institutional framework.

– The Governments will bear primary responsibility for implementation of the mandates of the Summit. The mechanism established by their Foreign Ministers, called the "Summit Implementation Review Group" (SIRG), will continue functioning under their immediate authority. The National Summit Coordinators of the Foreign Ministries will guarantee rapid contact, through the appropriate channels, with all Government agencies involved in carrying out the mandates resulting from the Summit meetings.

– The SIRG will meet on a periodic basis (two or three times a year) to monitor the follow-up process and assess the degree to which the Summit mandates have been fulfilled. It will be chaired by the country holding the Summit and co-chaired by both the country that has most recently served as host and the country that will serve as the next host ("troika"). Decisions will be adopted by consensus.

– Senior representatives of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the United Nations Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), will be invited to support the Governments participating in the SIRG in order to follow up on the commitments of the Summit and to achieve greater coordination and effectiveness of these institutions in performing this task. To that same end, a representative of the World Bank will be invited.

– The OAS Secretariat will be assigned responsibility for operating as a record-keeping mechanism (the institutional memory of the process) and for providing technical support to the SIRG.

– In accordance with Summit decisions, international organizations will have responsibilities in implementing this process and, as appropriate, according to Summit mandates, support will be provided by private sector organizations and civil society.

– In the case of specific mandates that require the convening of sectoral ministerials, these meetings, when appropriate, will take place under the aegis of the OAS Inter-American Council for Integral Development. Moreover, the OAS, IDB, PAHO, and ECLAC, as appropriate, will lend technical support to the meetings, the results of which will be reported to the States through the OAS Secretariat.

– The SIRG will annually report on the progress achieved in the fulfillment of the Plan of Action to the Foreign Ministers, who will review this information on the occasion of the Regular Session of the OAS General Assembly.

– Under the guidance of the Foreign Ministers, the SIRG will make preparations for the next Summit, bearing in mind the contributions of the pertinent organs of the OAS and other international organizations involved.